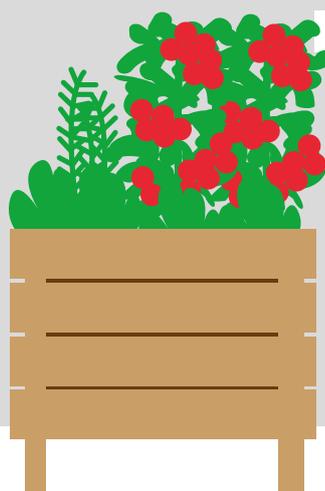




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# Vision for Walking

By 2030, Southwark will be well on its way to becoming a borough built for pedestrians. When you step out of your house you are met with a quiet, comfortable and safe environment. There is space to stop and talk to your neighbours. If motor vehicles are passing by, they are infrequent and moving slowly.

Heading into town to do your shopping or just running some errands will be easy. The route is level, clear and free from obstruction. There is also a scenic route through nearby parks and estates, but even along main roads you know the route is comfortable, safe and spacious. If you need to stop along the way there is always a place to sit. On a hot day there is plenty of shade; if it's raining there is shelter.

Maybe there's a market or something on when you get to the high street. Either way it's a nice place to hang out. After you've done some shopping maybe

you visit the new café that opened up and stop for some refreshment. Maybe just sit there and watch the world go by. There's plenty of seating amongst the trees.

It is a nice day, a good afternoon to go out and be in nature. There's plenty of nice walks around and between the parks. Or maybe you can send the kids out to play for the afternoon, and sit in the little park near your house, with a good book listening to nothing but the birds.



# Delivering a new plan

In July 2023, we adopted Streets for People, which set out how we plan to transform transport in the borough by 2030. Streets for People contains four main themes, looking at the different ways we can support our residents and visitors. They focus on delivering Streets for Communities, Streets for Journeys, Streets for the Economy and Streets for Nature.

Central to Streets for People is recognising that our streets are designed to prioritise motor vehicle journeys, and that this does not reflect the majority of people who live in, work in and visit Southwark. More than 60% of Southwark households do not own a car<sup>1</sup>. 37% of journeys in Southwark being pedestrian journeys<sup>2</sup>, the biggest proportion of any mode of travel. Most of the rest are by public transport, which involve sections of walking or wheeling. One of the key things we heard during the consultation on Streets for People was that people want to see less traffic on our streets. This was key to them feeling safer and enjoying time outside more, and encouraging them to walk and wheel more often and to visit new places.

Reducing the proportion of our streets that are used for motor vehicles, as well as the overall volume of traffic, is key to providing more space and a better environment for pedestrians. It will help to address some of the most important issues facing the people in Southwark over the coming decades. In 2021, 41 pedestrians were seriously injured in traffic collisions on our roads<sup>3</sup>. Such injuries are most likely to happen in more deprived areas<sup>4</sup>, even though the people living here are less likely to own motor vehicles.

In addition to causing serious injuries, the carbon, air and noise pollution created by motor vehicles, including electric vehicles, negatively impacts on the health of humans and the whole environment. These health and injury concerns discourage people from using public space, which makes it harder for people to exercise, even just by walking down the road, contributing to poor physical health. It also separates people from each other, weakening our communities and increasing their isolation. This is a significant contributor to the ongoing mental health crisis.

This plan sets out how we will support pedestrians and achieve the goals of Streets for People. It is divided into four sections, which look at different aspects of the pedestrian experience:

## Going outside

How we make sure every street is safe and accessible for everyone.

## Going places

How we make sure pedestrian journeys are easier.

## Going out

How we redesign busy public spaces around the needs of pedestrians.

## Going for a walk

How we will support walking, wheeling and running for leisure and exercise, by yourself or with friends.

1 Office for National Statistics, Census 2021. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/maps/>

2 Transport for London, London Travel Demand Survey 2017/18 – 2019/20 Available at: <https://tfl.gov.uk/corporate/publications-and-reports/travel-in-london-reports>

3 Transport for London, Road danger reduction dashboard. Available at: <https://tfl.gov.uk/corporate/publications-and-reports/road-safety>

4 Transport for London, Inequalities in road danger (2017–2021). June 2023. Available at: <https://content.tfl.gov.uk/inequalities-in-road-danger-in-london-2017-2021.pdf>

# Everyone is a pedestrian

Whether you are walking five miles to work, five minutes to the shop or five feet to the cycle hangar, everyone deserves a pedestrian environment they can use.

Historically, streets have been built around the needs of motor vehicles, with facilities for pedestrians provided around the edges. What facilities are provided have focused on the needs of a physically fit, able-bodied man, walking alone. Narrow, uneven pavements, frequent kerbs and poorly-sited street furniture create barriers that limit where people can go. This leaves people who struggle to navigate such obstacles feeling unwelcome and unsafe, and can exclude them from public spaces.

This plan sets out how we will change this, and how we will support all pedestrian journeys. We will improve streets for everyone who uses our pavements and footpaths. We will improve them for people in wheelchairs or mobility scooters, people with mobility issues, the visually-impaired and people with children or pushing prams. We will improve them for young children taking their first steps and older people who may need somewhere to rest. We will improve them for people taking shopping home and people making deliveries. We will improve them for the people who use our streets to go about their work, as well as those who maintain them. Everyone who spends time on the street outside of a vehicle, for however long, is a pedestrian, and this plan is for them.

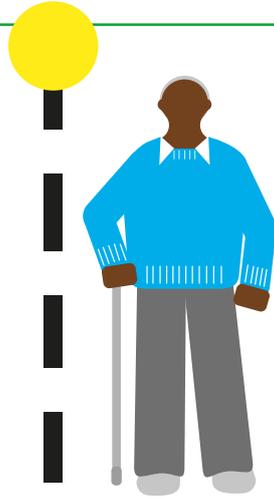


# What we have done so far

We already have a strong base on which to continue improving the walking experience in Southwark, we have:

Installed

**27**  
**zebra crossings** and  
made it easier to  
cross in more than  
**125**  
**other locations**  
since 2019



Introduced

**20 mph**  
speed limits on **all**  
**our roads**



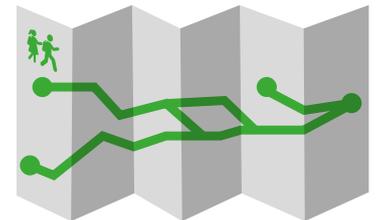
Delivered

**28**  
**School Streets**, closing  
streets at the start and end  
of the school day to make  
them safer and healthier



Produced

**35**  
**Walk to**  
**School maps**



Increased the coverage of  
**low-traffic areas** from

**11% to 41%**

since 2020, making residential  
neighbourhoods safer.



We will build on these achievements to turn Southwark into a borough where everyone feels safe and welcomed as a pedestrian.

# Going outside

Ensuring that all our pavements are safe,  
accessible and welcoming for everyone

Streets are the first public space people encounter.  
They are the first space children become familiar  
with outside of their homes. It is essential they are  
designed to welcome everyone, into their local  
neighbourhood and wider community.



# Objective 1: Providing a safe and accessible pedestrian environment

Streets for People commits us to providing quality public space that is accessible for all people. Too often, however, our streets are a barrier to movement, isolating people in their homes or encouraging them into cars if they want to get around.

To deliver on our commitment to create Streets for Communities, we need them to be places where everyone feels safe and comfortable. People in Southwark told us that cluttered, narrow, dirty, badly-lit and uneven pavements and paths discourage them from walking more<sup>5</sup>. Badly-designed pedestrian spaces make people feel unwelcome and unsafe. We need to redesign these spaces so people feel protected from collisions, crime and harassment.

We are committed to Vision Zero, and ensuring no-one is killed or seriously injured on our streets. Pedestrians are the most vulnerable road users, and

street design needs to protect them from dangerous and illegal behaviour by others. Streets should be a space for pedestrians first, where other visitors, especially motor vehicles, are guests.

The width of many pavements does not give enough space for all pavement users, including wheelchair users, people pushing prams or carrying shopping and making deliveries.

Signal-controlled crossings force pedestrians to wait, slowing down their journey; crossings with multiple phases are slower and less accessible and can leave pedestrians feeling vulnerable in the middle of a busy road. The Highway Code says that motor vehicles and cyclists on main roads should give way to pedestrians who have started crossing side roads. This is not reflected in the design of most junctions and often not respected by drivers. Redesigning our streets around pedestrian safety and comfort is key to addressing these issues. By reducing the space given to motor vehicles, we can ensure our streets are accessible to all pedestrians. By reducing vehicle speeds and dangerous conflicts with pedestrians, we reduce the risk of collision and injury, making our streets a safer environment.

Southwark is a signatory of the **Equal Pavements Pledge**, committing us to working with disabled groups and delivering a public realm that is accessible to everyone, regardless of their mobility needs.

## Equal Pavements Pledge

The Equal Pavements Pledge (see Appendix) commits us to do the following to make sure our pavements are accessible for disabled people:

- Listen, and act
- Keep it clear
- Cut the clutter
- Mind the trash
- Drop the kerbs
- Protect Blue Badge Bays
- Work with disabled experts

Source: *Transport for All*



5 Southwark Council, Sustainable Transport Strategy Consultation Report, July 2023

## What we will do:

- 1.1 Engage with local people and residents groups**, especially those representing traditionally excluded groups, to help design our streets.
- 1.2** In Streets for People, **we committed to delivering pedestrian paths of at least 2.4 metres wide**, wherever possible. This increases to four metres or in more in busy places. This width will be kept free from obstruction, such as street furniture, trees and new crossovers.
- 1.3** When we add things to the street, such as cycle parking, electric vehicle chargers or new planting, **we will not make pavements narrower** and will install them on the carriageway instead.
- 1.4** Ensure that **new pedestrian paths are as flat as possible and easy to use**, free from trip hazards such as loose paving and tree roots.
- 1.5 Ensure good drainage** to prevent standing water.
- 1.6** Design pedestrian infrastructure to be **usable in all weather and seasons**.
- 1.7 Use tactile surfaces and other guides** to make our streets as easy to navigate as possible for blind and partially-sighted people.
- 1.8 Not allow staggered barriers to be installed on paths on the highway**; these reduce access for people in wheelchairs and mobility scooters, or pushing prams.
- 1.9** Deliver safer facilities for all cyclists with our Cycling Plan. This will help **reduce cycling on the pavement**.
- 1.10 Design crossings and junctions to meet the needs of pedestrians.** Crossings will be located along desire lines: where people want to cross. They will be designed to prevent parking nearby, giving clear sightlines and allowing people to cross safely. Crossings at junctions will be designed to encourage drivers to give way.
- 1.11 Allocate space for motor vehicle parking where it is safe to do so.** We will use street design and traffic enforcement to prevent parking near junctions, as this makes crossing unsafe, and in front of dropped kerbs, which are essential for accessibility.
- 1.12 Design roads to encourage drivers to move at safe speeds.** Protecting pedestrians from traffic collisions is one of the most important things we can do to improve safety. Reducing speeds will reduce the chance of collisions and of serious injuries.
- 1.13 Whenever someone is killed or seriously injured on our streets, we will make sure we understand what happened** so we can keep making our streets safer.
- 1.14** Only **use signal-controlled crossings where they are necessary**, such as where there are high volumes of motor traffic. Crossings will allow pedestrians to cross the road completely, and not to wait halfway.

**1.15 Update the Southwark Streetscape Design Manual** to reflect these commitments. This will ensure they are delivered as part of all development in the borough, not just projects led by the council.

**1.16 Use street lighting effectively to make sure people feel safer going out at night**, while limiting the harmful effects of light pollution on humans and animals.

**1.17 Make sure waste is collected on time** and streets are cleaned frequently so rubbish doesn't block footways.

**1.18 Support businesses to keep pavements clear** and use our enforcement and licensing powers to ensure this if necessary.

**1.19 Factor in utilities access when designing pedestrian spaces**, so works don't block all of the pavement. Make sure that pedestrian spaces are restored to the highest quality after highways and utility works.

**1.20 Continue to respond to at least 95% of maintenance call-outs on time** and ensure at least 93% of our pavements are maintained in good order at any one time.



# Going places

## Supporting pedestrian journeys

Everyone starts and ends their journey as a pedestrian, even if it is just for the short distance from the front door to the bus stop. In Southwark, the biggest proportion of journeys are pedestrian journeys.

Supporting pedestrians means providing connected streets that are suitable for walking and wheeling. We need to think of our street network as a whole, supporting pedestrian journeys and reducing and removing barriers and providing crossings wherever we can. We want streets to provide the simplest, clearest routes possible that connect people and places directly together.



## Objective 2: Creating a connected network of streets

Walking and wheeling make up the biggest share of journeys in Southwark. Journeys by public transport – which generally also involve some walking and wheeling – make up the second biggest share of trips.

These two modes account for more than two-thirds of trips in Southwark, and yet we don't build our streets around pedestrian journeys. We build them to support motor vehicle journeys, giving drivers direct routes and clear signage. Pedestrians often use these same roads, but they are not built to support their journeys, making them unsafe and unpleasant.

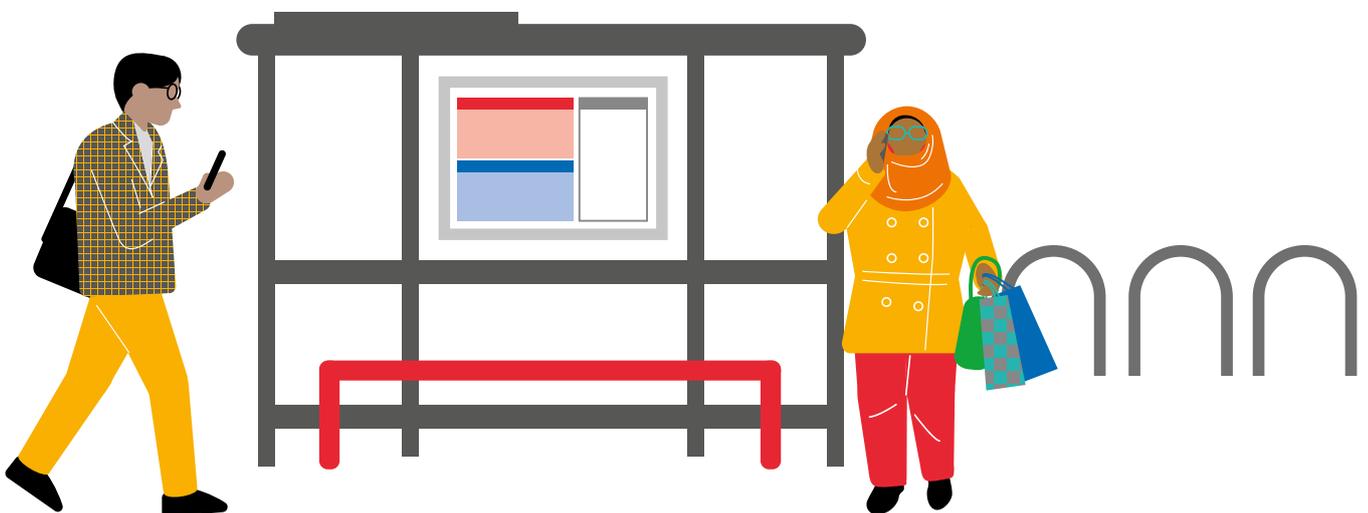
Putting the car first encourages driving. The proportion of journeys by car is still higher than it needs to be – more than a third of car journeys in London are less than 2km, about half-an-hour's walk<sup>6</sup>.

To support pedestrians, we need to think of streets and spaces as a coherent, connected network, helping people get to where they need to go. The goals of Objective 1 – making streets safe and accessible for everyone are key to this, as people's journeys can start and end anywhere. Major destinations, such as schools, train stations and high streets are busy places. Routes to these places will form the backbone of our high-quality Pedestrian Network. This Pedestrian Network will pass within 200 metres of everyone in Southwark and will be where we provide additional facilities to support pedestrian journeys. These will include places to rest for people that need it, and information on where to find toilets and other local amenities. This will also support people who work on our streets, such as delivery workers, street cleaners

and social and community health staff. The Pedestrian Network will connect to the mobility hubs that will be delivered as part of the Cycling Plan, to help people using both modes.

The Pedestrian Network will help us focus improvements where they are needed most. On local residential streets we will redirect traffic, reduce speeds and the space for motor vehicles. This will help make us pedestrian journeys safer and more comfortable, and allow us to deliver new facilities. Where the network reaches busier places, additional investments, such as new crossings, will be needed to keep pedestrians safe while maintaining necessary vehicle access. Thinking of movement across the whole borough will help us to identify gaps – such as across railway lines, retail parks, green spaces and housing estates – where new routes are needed to make pedestrian journeys shorter, quicker and quieter.

The Pedestrian Network will make it easier for people to get around different parts of Southwark. It should be easy to find where you are going, especially if you are new to an area. Maps and clear signs will help people get where they need to go. The Network should also reflect the character of the local areas and its residents. This will ensure that the Network feels a part of the neighbourhoods it passes through.



<sup>6</sup> Transport for London, Roads Task Force – Technical Note 14: Who travels by car in London and for what purpose? Available at: <https://content.tfl.gov.uk/technical-note-14-who-travels-by-car-in-london.pdf>

## What we will do:

**2.1 Develop a borough-wide Pedestrian Network plan by 2024.** This will be used to identify where improvements to comfort and safety, such as new crossings, rest areas and signs and maps, are required.

**2.2 Listen to local residents and community groups to develop this Pedestrian Network.** This will make sure that the network reflects where people actually walk and wheel. We will give people an opportunity to let us know what improvements are needed to make pedestrian journeys safer, more direct and more comfortable.

**2.3 Include the Pedestrian Network in our local plan.** This will ensure that new development in the borough helps to deliver the Pedestrian Network, and that new places are always easy to reach for pedestrians.

**2.4 Deliver new walk-to-school routes.** This will help children become familiar with using the Network and getting around Southwark as a pedestrian.



# Going out

## Prioritising pedestrians in public spaces

Our public spaces in Southwark are centred around streets. High levels of traffic undermine the aim of making these spaces safe and comfortable places to be.

Changing the way we manage public spaces is key to reimagining them as centres of a connected community and local economy.



## Objective 3: Designing public spaces around pedestrians

Prioritising motor vehicle access to social places increases noise and air pollution and the risk of collisions. It means when people visit these social spaces, whether by car or not, they are less likely to stay, reducing the opportunity to discover new places or meet new people.

By reducing traffic volumes and vehicle speed, and by providing more space to pedestrians in public spaces, such as outside schools, leisure centres or on our high streets, we will create opportunities for people to come together and connect with the wider community. Town centres that are welcoming to pedestrians, are more vibrant and encourage people to spend more time there<sup>7</sup>. Improving the pedestrian experience will help improve the local economy.

Reducing traffic on residential streets reduces people's exposure to noise and air pollution, benefitting their health. Streets with less traffic are nicer and safer places to be, helping people to build relationships with their neighbours and connect with their local community.



<sup>7</sup> Living Streets, The Pedestrian Pound, 2018. Available at: <https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/media/3890/pedestrian-pound-2018.pdf>

## What we will do:

**3.1 Consider opportunities for new social spaces** as part of the Pedestrian Network plan.

**3.2 Look for opportunities to improve existing, and create new, public spaces** when preparing the delivery plan for new projects.

**3.3** Reduce traffic on local residential roads, while protecting access. This will make the streets quieter and safer, and **provide more opportunities and space for communities to connect.**

**3.4** Direct traffic away from our town centres wherever possible, and use the space created to provide **new social spaces and to support the local economy, through measures such as markets and outdoor dining.**

**3.5** **Maintain motor vehicles access where it is needed for public transport access and to support the operation**

**of local businesses.** Use timed loading restrictions and other traffic control measures to keep vehicles away from the busiest times of the day.

**3.6 Reduce reliance on motor vehicles for delivering goods and services,** including the use of cars for shopping. we will do this by supporting walking and cycling first, and then sustainable freight measures on our streets. This includes expanding our cargo bike hire scheme, and using parcel consolidation, for example in lockers or local shops to reduce the traffic created by home deliveries. All this will allow us to create more space for pedestrians while allowing essential business to continue. Full details will be provided in our forthcoming Freight Plan.

**3.7 Deliver School Streets,** or, where they are not possible, other safety and public realm enhancements to create social spaces outside schools, allowing students, parents and guardians to interact.



# Going for a walk

Walking, wheeling and running for leisure and fitness

Walking and wheeling are great for mental and physical health.

We need to make sure we remember the importance of fun and enjoyment when we deliver facilities for pedestrians. Walking and wheeling are not always about getting somewhere.

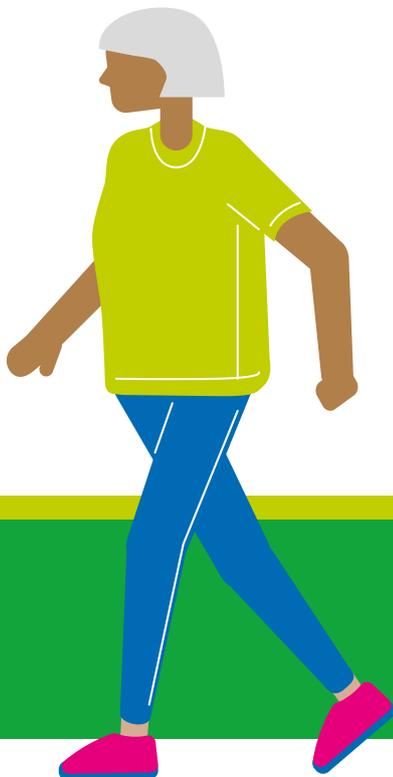


## Objective 4: Supporting walking, wheeling and running for leisure

Southwark is very green for inner London. We have many large parks and other green spaces across the borough. These are already pleasant and peaceful places to be, but not everyone lives close to a park.

Outdoor exercise is great for mental and physical health, and we need to do what we can to support these activities. We have recently developed a series of pedestrian routes, helping people visit and explore our historic urban environment. The Green Chain Walk passes through the borough, linking Nunhead and Camberwell Old and New cemeteries through other green spaces and quiet streets. The Thames Path follows the river from one side of the borough to the other. We are also helping to create the Low Line through Borough, Bermondsey, Walworth and Camberwell, as part of the regeneration of railway arches.

More of this type of amenity is needed although we need to minimise conflict between people moving at different speeds by making sure there is enough space for everyone.



### What we will do:

- 4.1** Consider **the needs of all leisure journeys, including runners and dog walkers** in the development of our pedestrian network.
- 4.2** Look for opportunities to **extend existing long-distance leisure routes** and connect them with our parks and green spaces. We will link them to our town centres and train stations so they are easy to access.
- 4.3** Work with neighbouring councils to **introduce new, high-quality long-distance routes**. We will aim to deliver routes across the borough, so all residents get the opportunity to enjoy them.
- 4.4** Seek to deliver space and **facilities for running and other exercise** in places where we can provide wide pedestrian spaces, separated from motor traffic, and on routes connecting people with our parks.
- 4.5** **Coordinate pedestrian routes and our leisure centres**, developing programmes that use our streets as an additional exercise space and an easy way for people to improve their fitness.
- 4.6** Organise events to **celebrate our pedestrian network and leisure routes** and showcase the borough's achievements in delivering them. These could include runs and walks through our parks and connected routes, as well as street parties and seasonal markets. We will work with neighbourhoods and other groups to generate ideas and deliver events.

# Appendix:

## The Equal Pavement Pledge

Southwark is a signatory to Transport for All's Equal Pavements Pledge, which commits us to working with and considering the needs of disabled people to make sure we deliver a pedestrian environment that is accessible to everyone.

**The Equal Pavements Pledge contains seven commitments:**

### 1. Listen, and act

Engage with and listen to the perspectives of disabled people, across the impairment groups, who have been significantly erased from the conversation. By doing this, we can move forward with accessible, inclusive, pan-impairment solutions which benefit everyone, and the environment.

### 2. Keep it clear

Maintain a minimum of 1.5m clearance on all pavements, by enforcing the terms of your licenses with businesses. Issue written warnings and follow up with on-site visits to premises to enforce the terms. Use roaming 'inspectors' to ensure pavements aren't blocked.

### 3. Cut the clutter

Operate a zero-tolerance approach to street clutter. Issue warnings to businesses that obstruct pavements with A-boards, and follow up with fines. Consider temporarily removing permanent fixtures, for example bollards and lamp posts, while outdoor furniture is on pavements to maintain a clear path. Electric Vehicle charging points should only be situated on a pavement as a last resort if there are no other options, and must be placed in a way that will not cause obstruction or trip hazard from trailing cables.

### 4. Mind the trash

Schedule waste removal at times that will be the least disruptive, reducing the issue of bags of rubbish being left on pavements during periods of high footfall.

### 5. Drop the kerbs

Undertake a professional accessibility audit of your streetspace and install immediate short-term measures (e.g: asphalt ramps) at problem areas to ensure step-free access. This is a short term and immediate solution while more long-term solutions, including proper dropped kerbs and correct tactile paving where appropriate, are devised and installed.

### 6. Protect Blue Badge Bays

Do not remove parking spaces for Blue Badge holders except where supported by robust data and in consultation with disabled residents. In rare occasions where this is unavoidable, the bays must be relocated close to the original location and any plans should be consulted on with disabled residents to avoid impeding access.

### 7. Work with disabled experts

We want to see local authorities and transport providers commit to a co-production model built on the views and expertise of a wide range of disabled voices. Work with representatives from a pan-impairment organisation who can train your team and work with you to embed the Social Model of Disability to ensure all future streetspace schemes are delivered with accessibility at their core.

