



For our health.
Our wellbeing.
Our world.

UK report

Walking and Cycling Index 2025



Our vision for walking, wheeling and cycling



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Imagine a society where the way we travel creates healthier places and happier lives for everyone.

This is a vision shared by Walk Wheel Cycle Trust and the Walking and Cycling Index local authority partners we work with across the UK.

Walking, wheeling, and cycling are among the best, and cheapest, ways we can improve our health, our wellbeing, and the world around us. They are everyday actions with a big impact.

Across the UK, local leaders are facing challenges: from stretched public health services to the cost-of-living crisis and climate change. Tackling these challenges requires solutions that work in a big way and across multiple priorities.

This is where the Walking and Cycling Index comes in. The 2025 Index is the largest and most comprehensive assessment of walking, wheeling and cycling to date. It shows just how powerful these everyday journeys can be and how people support more investment and action to improve walking, wheeling and cycling.

Everyone benefits when more people walk, wheel and cycle. Across all Index areas,

walking, wheeling and cycling prevent an estimated 28,037 serious long-term health conditions each year. Extrapolated to towns and cities across the UK, this equates to almost 156,000 serious long-term health conditions prevented annually.^[i]

The Index allows us to track progress over time, and in some cases where progress is falling short. Despite growing awareness and community initiatives, there has been little progress in closing the gender gap in cycling, with more than twice as many men as women cycling once a week in 2025, a pattern that has repeated year-on-year.

It's exciting to welcome this report as the newly named Walk Wheel Cycle Trust. More than ever, the report highlights a need for long-term funding and stronger policies so that together we can build an inclusive and integrated transport system, one that connects safely to new developments and existing communities.

The 2025 Walking and Cycling Index shows that if we make active travel easy, safe and accessible, everyone benefits, with improvements to our health, our wellbeing and our world.

i. This is based on extrapolating our data to the adult (16+) UK urban population, assuming similar walking, wheeling and cycling levels.

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The Walking and Cycling Index

The Walking and Cycling Index is the biggest assessment of walking, wheeling and cycling in the UK and Ireland. It is delivered by Walk Wheel Cycle Trust (formerly Sustrans) in collaboration with 22 regional and local partners. Each area reports on the progress made towards making walking, wheeling and cycling a more attractive, everyday way to travel.

The Walking and Cycling Index reports every two years.

The data in this report comes from 2025 and includes local walking, wheeling and cycling data, modelling and an independent, demographically representative survey of 22,416 residents aged 16 or above in the seventeen UK Index areas. The survey was conducted from March to June 2025. Social research organisation NatCen conducted the survey, which is representative of all residents, not just those who walk, wheel or cycle.

Our thanks to the people of UK Index areas who took part in the survey and shared their stories with us.

More details on all reports and an interactive data tool to explore the data in more depth can be found at www.walkwheelcycletrust.org.uk/walking-cycling-index



Defining wheeling

Some people who use a wheelchair or a mobility scooter may not identify with the term walking and may prefer to use the term wheeling. We use the terms walking and wheeling together to ensure we are as inclusive as possible.

Headlines

UK aggregated

Population^[i]
11,452,036

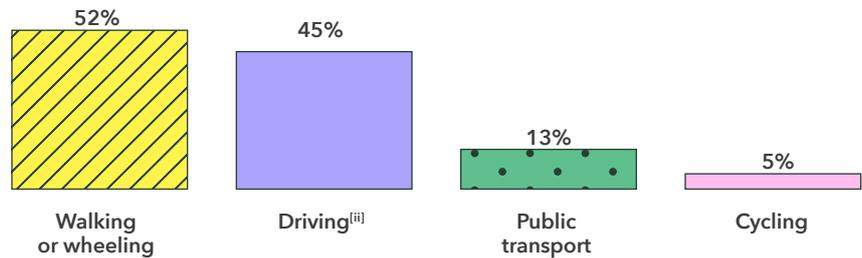
9,389,218 adults
2,062,818 children



Frequency of different modes of travel

Walking and wheeling is the most common mode of transport amongst residents of UK Index area residents.

Residents who travel by the following modes five or more days a week in UK Index areas



i. ONS 2024 mid-year population estimates for England and Wales, NRS 2024 mid-year population estimates for Aberdeen, Dundee, Glasgow and Edinburgh, NRS Census 2022 for Dunfermline, Inverness, Perth and Stirling and NISRA 2024 mid-year population estimates for Belfast. This is the most recent available for UK Index areas.

ii. Travelling as driver or passenger of car, van or motorcycle.

Walking, wheeling and cycling participation is not equal

Residents' travel choices and their perceptions of walking, wheeling and cycling sometimes vary widely between different groups.

52%

of residents walk or wheel at least five days a week

Proportion of residents who walk or wheel at least five days a week

57% of people aged 16–25

47% of people aged 66+

14%

of residents cycle at least once a week

Proportion of residents who cycle at least once a week

9% of women

20% of men

16% of people who identified their gender in another way^[iii]

Not all residents feel safe and welcome in their neighbourhood

Proportion of residents who think it's safe to walk or wheel in their local area

62% of disabled people

74% of non-disabled people

Proportion of residents who think it's safe to cycle in their local area

39% of LGBTQ+ people

46% of non-LGBTQ+ people

Proportion of residents who feel welcome and comfortable walking, wheeling or spending time on the streets of their neighbourhood^[iv]

63% of socio-economic group DE

78% of socio-economic group AB

iii. See footnote on page 6.

iv. Socio-economic groups AB are managerial while groups DE are manual occupations, homemakers and people not in employment. See page 6 for full definitions.

Everyone benefits when more people walk, wheel and cycle

Based on modelling of survey data, every year, walking, wheeling and cycling:

prevents

28,037

serious long-term health conditions

saves the NHS

£346.7 million

equivalent to the cost of 7.7 million GP appointments

saves

500,000 tonnes

of greenhouse gas emissions

Walking, wheeling and cycling reduces congestion by taking up to 2.9 million cars off the roads every day.

Residents want to walk, wheel and cycle more and drive less

Percentage of residents who would like to use different types of transport more or less in the future:

23% of residents want to drive less. 42% of residents agree that they often use a car because no other transport options are available.

Walk or wheel

49% more



4% less



Cycle

43% more



3% less



Take public transport

33% more



11% less



Drive

15% more



23% less



Cycling is seen as less safe than other forms of transport

Percentage of residents who think it's safe in their local area to:

70% walk or wheel



45% cycle



74% use public transport



80% drive



Residents support more connected neighbourhoods

54% of residents support shifting investment from road-building schemes to fund walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport. 18% oppose such a shift.

69% support



13% oppose



stopping vehicles parking on the pavement

77% support



8% oppose



improving and increasing off-road walking, wheeling and cycling paths

71% support



6% oppose



improving walking, wheeling and cycling access to bus stops and coach or rail stations

71% support



10% oppose



reducing speed limits, improving crossing points and introducing protected cycle paths in school neighbourhoods

59% support



19% oppose



closing residential streets outside schools to cars during drop-off and pick-up times

76% support



8% oppose



having shops, schools, green space and public transport within a short walk or wheel of their home^v

v. Local places with services and amenities nearby your home are often known as 20-minute neighbourhoods.

Walking and wheeling

Participation, safety and satisfaction



Walking and wheeling participation

Overall in UK Index areas, the number of residents walking and wheeling at least five days a week has stayed about the same since 2023.

Encouragingly, the majority of residents feel it's safe to walk or wheel in their local area, although only 49% believe it is safe for children.

94%
of all residents
walk or wheel

52%
of all residents
walk or wheel
at least five
days a week

Proportion of residents who walk or wheel at least five days a week

Gender and sexuality

50% of women



54% of men



56% of people who identified their gender in another wayⁱ



57% of LGBTQ+ people



51% of non-LGBTQ+ people

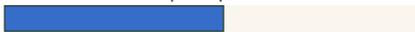


Ethnicity

48% of people from ethnic minority groups

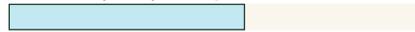


53% of white people



Age

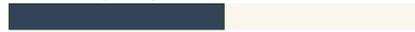
57% of people aged 16-25



56% of people aged 26-35



52% of people aged 36-45



49% of people aged 46-55



50% of people aged 56-65



47% of people aged 66+



Disability

46% of disabled people



54% of non-disabled people

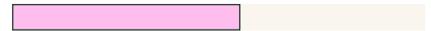


Socio-economic groupⁱⁱ

54% of AB



55% of C1



42% of C2



48% of DE



i. The sample size for respondents who identified their gender 'in another way' is 0.9% of the total sample.

ii. Socio-economic group is a classification based on occupation maintained by the Market Research Society. Groups A and B are professional and managerial. Group C1 is supervisory/clerical and students. Group C2 is skilled manual. Groups D and E are semi-skilled and unskilled manual occupations, homemakers and people not in employment.

Walking and wheeling safety and satisfaction

70%

of all residents think it's safe to walk or wheel in their local area

49%

of all residents think it's safe for children to walk or wheel in their local area

73%

of all residents think their local area overall is a good place to walk or wheel

Proportion of residents who think it's safe to walk or wheel in their local area

Gender and sexuality

70% of women



71% of men



64% of people who identified their gender in another way



69% of LGBTQ+ people



71% of non-LGBTQ+ people

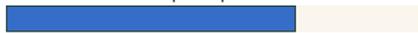


Ethnicity

71% of people from ethnic minority groups

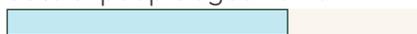


70% of white people

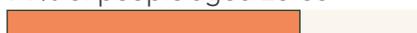


Age

68% of people aged 16-25



71% of people aged 26-35



71% of people aged 36-45



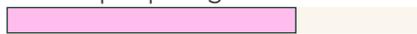
72% of people aged 46-55



70% of people aged 56-65

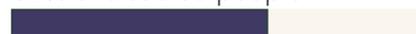


70% of people aged 66+



Disability

62% of disabled people



74% of non-disabled people



Socio-economic group

74% of AB



71% of C1



67% of C2



65% of DE



Aminah, Leicester

I came to Leicester from Pakistan in 2023 to do a PhD in Economics.

Back home, I always drove, but here I couldn't manage the cost and hassle of a car.

I had stomach and blood pressure issues when I arrived, but it was hard to get a doctor's appointment. I started walking the 45 minutes to university every day and by the time I saw a doctor, my health issues had gone.

I'd thought medication was just part of ageing, but this experience changed my mindset. Walking improved my health, and I realised age really is just a number.

Cycling

Participation, safety and satisfaction



Cycling participation

There is great potential for cycling in the UK. Only on third of residents cycle at all and 14% of residents cycle at least once a week.

Currently only 45% of residents think its safe to cycle, and only 33% think it's safe for children to cycle in their local area. Safety must be improved if we are to attract more people to start cycling.

33%
of all
residents cycle

14%
of all residents
cycle at least
once a week

Proportion of residents who cycle at least once a week

Gender and sexuality

9% of women



20% of men



16% of people who identified their gender in another way



16% of LGBTQ+ people



14% of non-LGBTQ+ people

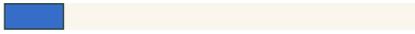


Ethnicity

14% of people from ethnic minority groups



14% of white people



Age

14% of people aged 16-25



15% of people aged 26-35



16% of people aged 36-45



17% of people aged 46-55



15% of people aged 56-65



9% of people aged 66+



Disability

9% of disabled people



16% of non-disabled people

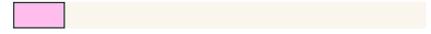


Socio-economic group

18% of AB



12% of C1



13% of C2



11% of DE



Cycling safety and satisfaction

45%

of all residents think it's safe to cycle in their local area

33%

of all residents think it's safe for children to cycle in their local area

47%

of all residents think their local area overall is a good place to cycle

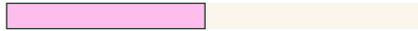
Proportion of residents who think it's safe to cycle in their local area

Gender and sexuality

41% of women



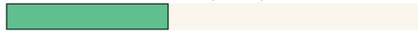
48% of men



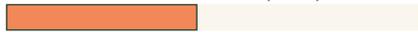
28% of people who identified their gender in another way



39% of LGBTQ+ people

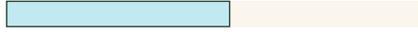


46% of non-LGBTQ+ people



Ethnicity

54% of people from ethnic minority groups



43% of white people



Age

46% of people aged 16-25



43% of people aged 26-35



48% of people aged 36-45



49% of people aged 46-55



44% of people aged 56-65



39% of people aged 66+



Disability

37% of disabled people

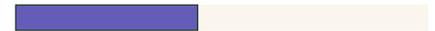


47% of non-disabled people

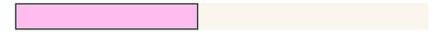


Socio-economic group

44% of AB



44% of C1



48% of C2



43% of DE



Claire, Dundee

I am really lucky. We've got an amazing cycle route right on our doorstep that goes almost all the way to my office. It's fast, safe, and a convenient way to travel. It makes for a more peaceful start to my day rather than driving. It would be great if this could be city-wide and everyone had access to infrastructure like this.

These paths have been great for my kids too. It gives them the space to ride freely and play on their bikes in a safe environment. I truly believe having these routes helps them grow confident on their bikes. My youngest is almost 3 and is already cycling without stabilisers! I feel like these paths are really setting my kids up for choosing active travel in the future. It also replaced a lot of the car trips we used to take. We now often cycle to the waterfront in Dundee, and it's turned into a fun outing rather than what was previously a car journey.

Benefits of walking and wheeling

Why everyone gains when more people walk or wheel



Together, residents of UK Index areas walk or wheel 519 times around the world every day

Walking and wheeling improves health and air quality, saves the NHS money, and reduces congestion.

Residents made

4.53 billion

walking and wheeling trips
in 2025

This adds up to

4.72 billion miles

per year

or

12.9 million miles

per day

This equates to each
resident spending

5 days

walking or wheeling

continuously in the past year

Annual walking and wheeling trips by purpose

Enjoyment or fitness,
including running
(adults and children):
1,875,000,000

41%

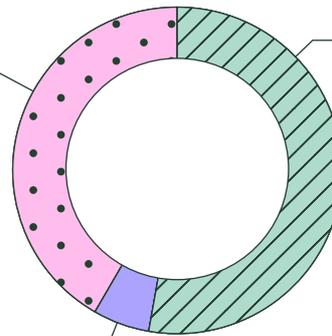
Destination - such as work,
school, shopping (adults):
2,396,100,000

53%

School (children):
257,600,000

6%

Average walking or wheeling
trip distance: 1 mile



Walking and wheeling benefits residents and society

We model the costs and benefits of walking and wheeling journeys, including those that replace trips which could have been driven, using our Societal Gain model. This includes travel time, vehicle operating costs, health benefits, air quality and taxation.

The total annual economic
benefit from all trips walked and
wheeled in UK Index areas is

£7.75 billion

Many of these trips were made by people with access to a car. For these (excluding trips for enjoyment or fitness) our model compares the costs and benefits of walking and wheeling to those of driving.

For these journeys, depending on the area, between **54p** and **£1.13** is saved for each mile walked or wheeled instead of driven.^[1] Over a year this adds up to **£1.13 billion** in economic benefit for residents and society from **1.19 billion miles** walked or wheeled by those that could have used a car.

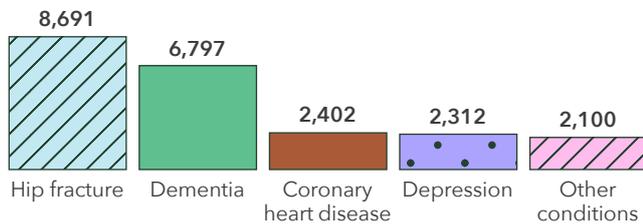


i. The variation is mainly due to the differences in traffic speed between areas and the cost ascribed to congestion in urban areas of different sizes.

Walking and wheeling unlocks health benefits for everyone

Walking in UK Index areas prevents 22,302 serious long-term health conditions each year.

Cases prevented



This saves the NHS

£274 million per year

Equivalent to the cost of

6.1 million GP appointments

Above figures are based on applying data from the UK Index areas to Sport England MOVES tool, which shows the return on investment for health of sport and physical activity. 'Other conditions' includes type 2 diabetes, stroke, breast cancer and colorectal cancer.

The physical activity benefits from walking

prevent 5,309 early deaths annually

which is valued at

£21.8 billion

Based on WHO/Europe Health Economic Assessment Tool (HEAT), which enables an economic assessment of the health benefits of walking by estimating the value of reduced mortality resulting from specified amounts of walking.

Wheelchair and mobility scooter trips are modelled as walking trips for the purposes of the MOVES and HEAT models.

People walking and wheeling instead of driving improves air quality, saving:

790,000 kg of NO_x

(Nitric oxide and nitrogen dioxide)

and

69,000 kg of particulates

(PM₁₀, which includes PM_{2.5}) annually.

47% of residents agree the air is clean in their local area



Walking and wheeling helps mitigate the climate crisis

By walking or wheeling instead of driving, residents save

320,000 tonnes

of greenhouse gas emissions (carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide) annually.

This is equivalent to the carbon footprint of

290,000 people taking flights

from Heathrow to New York.

In 2023 domestic transport accounted for **29%** of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions, of which the main sources are the use of petrol and diesel in road transport.

Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, 2023 UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Final Figures.

Walking and wheeling keeps UK Index areas moving

Studies show walking or cycling frees up road space in comparison to driving.^[ii] This helps to keep UK Index areas moving for all road users.

2.6 million return trips

are walked and wheeled daily by residents who could have used a car.

If these cars were all in a traffic jam it would tail back

7,629 miles

equivalent to nine times the distance from Liverpool to Jakarta.

ii. Litman, 2023. Evaluating Transportation Land Use Impacts. Based upon Eric Bruun and Vuchic, 1995. The Time-Area Concept.

Benefits of cycling

Why everyone gains when more people cycle



Together, residents of UK Index areas cycle 170 times around the world every day

Cycling can be convenient for many local trips, especially in cities and towns. It gives people transport choice and access to education, jobs and community.

Residents made
434.4 million
cycling trips in 2025

This adds up to
1.54 billion miles
per year
or
4.2 million miles
per day

Annual cycling trips by purpose

Leisure (adults and children):
83,300,000

19%

Shopping, personal business and social trips (adults):
132,400,000

30%

School (children):
18,000,000

4%

To work (adults):
130,100,000

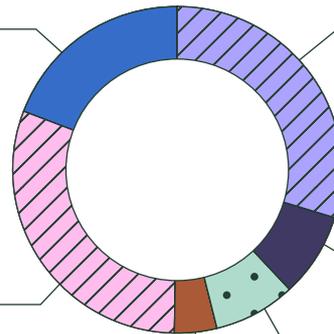
30%

Part of work (adults):
35,400,000

8%

School, college or university (adults):
35,200,000

8%



Average cycling trip distance: 3.5 miles

Cycling benefits residents and society

We model the costs and benefits of cycling journeys, including those that replace trips which could have been driven, using our Societal Gain model. This includes travel time, vehicle operating costs, health benefits, air quality and taxation.

The total annual economic benefit from all trips cycled in UK Index areas is

£1.81 billion

i. The variation is mainly due to the differences in traffic speed between areas and the cost ascribed to congestion in urban areas of different sizes.

Many of these trips were made by people with access to a car. For these (excluding trips for leisure) our model compares the costs and benefits of cycling to those of driving.

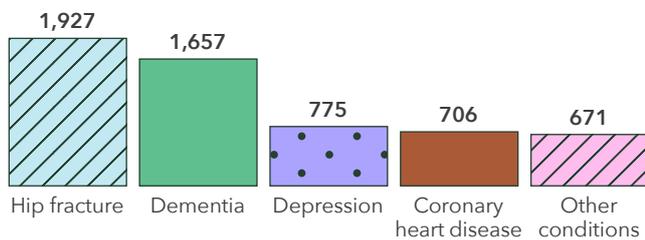
For these journeys, between **£1.25** and **£1.84** is saved for each mile cycled instead of driven.^[i] Over a year this adds up to **£1.11 billion** in economic benefit for residents and society from **688.9 million miles** cycled by those that could have used a car.



Cycling unlocks health benefits for everyone

Cycling in UK Index areas prevents 5,736 serious long-term health conditions each year.

Cases prevented



This saves the NHS

£72.7 million per year

Equivalent to the cost of

1.6 million GP appointments

Above figures are based on applying data from the UK Index areas to Sport England MOVES tool, which shows the return on investment for health of sport and physical activity. 'Other conditions' includes type 2 diabetes, stroke, breast cancer and colorectal cancer.

The physical activity benefits from cycling

prevent 545 early deaths annually

which is valued at

£2.24 billion

Based on WHO/Europe Health Economic Assessment Tool (HEAT), which enables an economic assessment of the health benefits of cycling by estimating the value of reduced mortality resulting from specified amounts of cycling.

People cycling instead of driving improves air quality, saving:

300,000 kg of NO_x

(Nitric oxide and nitrogen dioxide)

and

32,000 kg of particulates

(PM₁₀, which includes PM_{2.5}) annually.

47% of residents agree the air is clean in their local area



Cycling helps mitigate the climate crisis

By cycling instead of driving, residents save

190,000 tonnes

of greenhouse gas emissions (carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide) annually.

This is equivalent to the carbon footprint of

170,000 people taking flights

from Heathrow to New York.

In 2023 domestic transport accounted for **29%** of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions, of which the main sources are the use of petrol and diesel in road transport.

Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, 2023 UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Final Figures.

Cycling keeps UK Index areas moving

Studies show walking or cycling frees up road space in comparison to driving.^[1] This helps to keep UK Index areas moving for all road users.

360,000 return trips

are cycled daily by residents who could have used a car.

If these cars were all in a traffic jam it would tail back

1,069 miles

equivalent to the distance from London to Rome.

i. Litman, 2023. Evaluating Transportation Land Use Impacts. Based upon Eric Bruun and Vuchic, 1995. The Time-Area Concept.

Walking and wheeling solutions

What would help make walking and wheeling easier?



New homes and existing communities should have services and amenities within walking and wheeling distance

Putting walking and wheeling at the heart of new and existing communities gives people greater transport choice, while reducing car dependency.

53%

agree they can easily get to many places they need to visit without having to drive

60%

support stopping new housing developments in areas where driving is the only practical option to visit local services, such as shops and doctors surgeries

New developments and existing communities can support walking and wheeling by ensuring many of the things people need are found near to where people live.

What percentage of residents would find more local amenities and services useful to help them walk or wheel more?

82%

more shops and everyday services, such as banks and post offices, close to their home

77%

more government services, such as doctors surgeries and schools, close to their home

84%

more parks or green spaces close to their home

82%

more things to see and do close to their home, like cafés or entertainment venues

Residents want walking and wheeling to better align with buses

While walking and wheeling should be the most attractive option for short journeys, it should also be integrated with public transport for longer trips.

Walking and bus use is the most common form of multi-modal journey across the UK. If we are to increase walking and wheeling and bus trips, residents told us they need practical improvements to better integrate these modes of transport.



What percentage of residents would find these changes useful to help them take journeys that include walking or wheeling and the bus more often?

76%

more information to help them plan and take a journey (such as apps, maps, signage or public transport staff)

68%

more direct walking and wheeling routes from housing estates to bus stops

68%

accessible walking and wheeling routes to and from bus stops

73%

improved safety while walking or wheeling to and from the bus stop

74%

improved walking and wheeling crossing facilities near bus stops

83%

improved bus stops (such as accessible, well lit and maintained, cover from rain, display of service information)

Residents want better streets

There are many ways to make our streets and neighbourhoods safe, welcoming and comfortable for everyone to walk or wheel in.

What percentage of residents think that these changes would help them walk or wheel more?

73%
wider pavements

73%
more frequent road crossings, with reduced wait times

80%
nicer places along streets to stop and rest, like more benches, trees and shelters

75%
better pavement accessibility, like level surfaces and dropped kerbs at crossing points

70%
fewer cars parked on the pavement

71%
less fear of crime or antisocial behaviour in their area

In UK Index areas, for each road making up a junction with traffic lights

79% have a pedestrian crossing

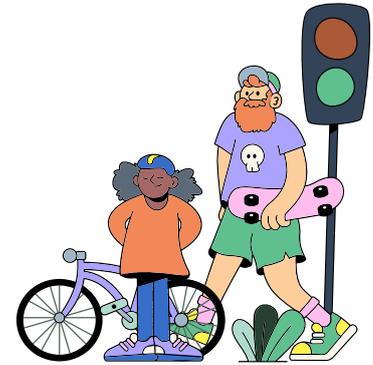


21% don't have a pedestrian crossing



For example, a T-junction has three roads making up the junction, and a crossroads has four.

Excludes Bristol, Cardiff, Greater Manchester and the North East Combined Authority as data was not available.



Abbas, Cardiff

Since moving to Cardiff, I've decided to explore Cardiff on foot and I've found it to be an unparalleled experience, combining history, modern organisation and green spaces.

Being in the heart of Cardiff, you always feel there's more to see, and you discover this when walking in and around the city centre and all its districts.

However, not every walk in Cardiff feels smooth.

Congested roads are often a challenge to cross.

The city continues to need more work to organise, such as how traffic moves around the centre, expanding pavements, providing different types of seating.

For people to continue to get the most out of visiting, experiencing and enjoying Cardiff, we need to encourage walking so that it remains an important activity for our health and our environment.

Cycling solutions

What would make cycling better?

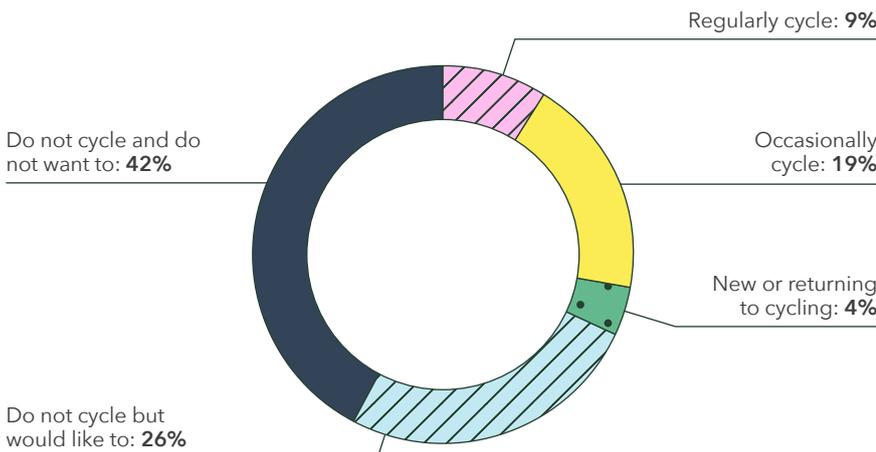


Many residents want to cycle

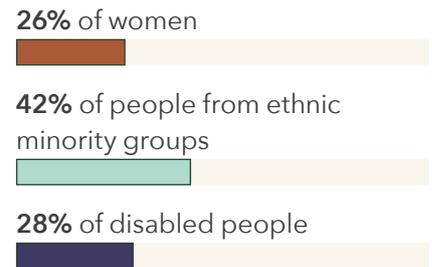
There is considerable appetite to start cycling from residents who don't already.

To meet this demand we must address safety, ensuring people have dedicated space for cycling, as well as supporting access to a cycle, training, cycle parking, and better integration of cycling with public transport.

How do residents see themselves when it comes to cycling?

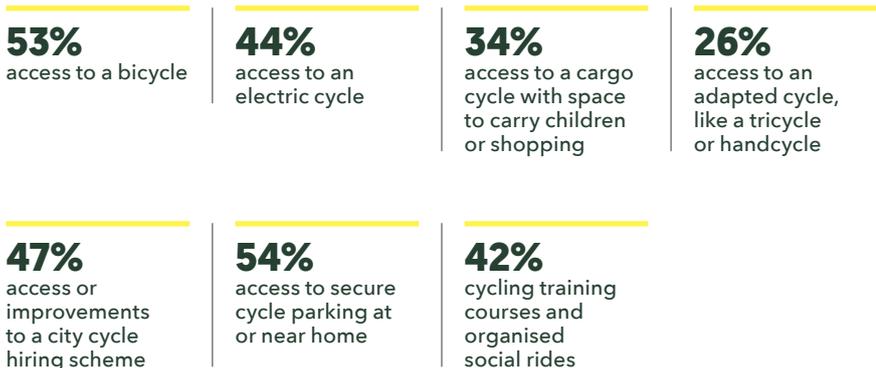


What proportion of residents said they 'do not cycle but would like to'

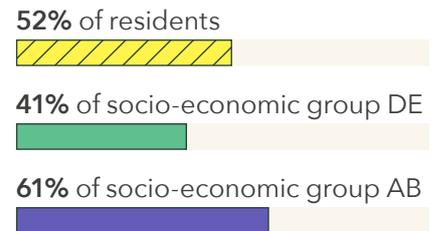


Residents want more support to cycle

What percentage of residents think that these kinds of support would help them start cycling or to cycle more?



Proportions of residents with access to an adult cycle



Residents want improved cycling infrastructure

People want networks of dedicated and safe cycle paths, cycle parking and better integration with public transport.

In UK Index areas there are:

21% of households

are within 125 metres of either traffic-free cycle paths away from the road, cycle paths physically separated from traffic and pedestrians, or signposted routes along quieter streets^[i]

2,019 miles of traffic-free cycle paths away from the road^[iii]

198 miles of cycle paths physically separated from traffic and pedestrians^[iii]

191 miles of signposted routes along quieter streets^[iv]

17,056 cycle parking spaces across 631 railway, bus and 'other' stations^[v]

What percentage of residents would be helped to start cycling or to cycle more by better facilities?

67% more traffic-free cycle paths away from roads, like through parks or along waterways

63% more cycle paths along roads that are physically separated from traffic and pedestrians

62% more signposted local cycle routes along quieter streets

66% better links with public transport, like secure cycle parking at train stations, bus stops/stations

Among residents:

77% support improving and increasing local off-road walking, wheeling and cycling paths

58% support building more cycle paths physically separated from traffic and pedestrians, even when this would mean less room for other road traffic

71% support improving walking, wheeling and cycling access to bus stops and coach or rail stations

- i. Percentages exclude households from Inverness and Peterborough as cycle route length data was not provided, as well as from North East Combined Authority due to inconsistent availability of route length data from across the local authorities.
- ii. Excludes data from Inverness and Peterborough for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and Northumberland for North East Combined Authority as data was not provided for these areas.
- iii. Excludes data from Inverness, County Durham, Northumberland and South Tyneside for the North East Combined Authority and Peterborough for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority as data was not provided for these areas. Dunfermline currently have no segregated cycle routes.
- iv. Excludes Aberdeen, Belfast, Bristol, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, Dundee, Dunfermline, Greater Manchester, Inverness, Perth and Southampton City Region as data was not provided. Data for North East Combined Authority excludes County Durham, North Tyneside, Northumberland and South Tyneside. Glasgow City Council followed the Cycling by Design 2021 guidance for Mixed Traffic Streets, which does not entirely match the Index definition for this category.
- v. Includes cycle parking outside: metro stations and ferry terminals in the North East Combined Authority, subway stations in Glasgow, tram stations in Greater Manchester and ferry terminals in Liverpool City Region. In Bristol, Inverness and Perth, bus station cycle parking which is outside stations and could be used by the wider public as well as passengers is not included in the total. Bus station cycle parking includes spaces at Park and Ride stations in Aberdeen, Belfast, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, Edinburgh, Greater Manchester, Leicester and Perth.



Mike, NICU support, Bristol

We run a team of volunteers who collect and deliver essential, life-saving, donor breast milk from volunteer mothers in Bristol for sick and premature babies around the South West. Around four years ago we started doing the collections by e-bike, and it's so much quicker and less restricted by traffic. There's still room for improvement on the cycling network, but the recent changes, like on Upper Maudlin Street by the hospitals, are superb. The city is making great progress.

Neighbourhood solutions

Thriving places, centring children

Neighbourhoods should prioritise the needs and wellbeing of the people who live there and visit. They should be planned to support community, foster social connection, and be places where everyone feels welcome.

Designing neighbourhoods with children in mind means they work better for everyone.

Improving the journey to school

Schools are at the centre of many neighbourhoods and should be part of any plan to make neighbourhoods better.

This means working with schools to encourage walking, wheeling and cycling, but also improving the neighbourhood around schools to reduce traffic and improve pavements, crossing points and cycle provision.

59% support



19% oppose



closing residential streets outside schools to cars during drop-off and pick-up times

71% support



10% oppose



reducing speed limits, improving crossing points and introducing protected cycle paths in school neighbourhoods

These are known as 'School Streets'.

213 schools

in UK Index areas have School Streets schemes^[i]



Giving children the independence to roam, play and develop

Neighbourhoods should be places for children to thrive. Well-designed neighbourhoods can give children freedom to move around, play and socialise, helping children's independence, social skills, and autonomy.

Average age when parents and carers would let children travel independently in their neighbourhood

11 years old
to walk or wheel

12 years old
to cycle

13 years old
to use public transport

47%

agree there is space for children to socialise and play

Fewer children play out on their streets than ever before. Just **27%** of children said they regularly play outside their homes, compared to **71%** of those born between 1946 and 1964.

Save the Children, Summer of Play campaign survey, 2022.



i. There are currently no permanent School Streets schemes in Aberdeen, Belfast, Dunfermline, Inverness and Stirling. Certain School Streets schemes in Cardiff, Dundee, Glasgow, Greater Manchester, Leicester and Southampton City Region cover more than one school.

Residents support child-safe neighbourhoods

Adults support child-safe neighbourhoods, including traffic-reduction targets and measures to reduce through traffic and traffic speed, but this must be done fairly.

30%

of residents think that their streets are not dominated by moving or parked motor vehicles

58%

support setting traffic-reduction targets and taking action to achieve these

63%

support low-traffic neighbourhoods

22%

of the total length of unclassified roads in UK Index areas have nothing to prevent through traffic. This can result in rat running.^[iii]

Residents would find fewer motor vehicles on their streets useful to:

64% walk or wheel more



57% cycle more



57%

support reducing speed limits on local roads in built-up areas to 20 mph speed limits

35%

of UK Index areas' streets have 20 mph speed limits (excluding motorways)^[iii]

Residents would find more streets with 20 mph speed limits useful to:

52% walk or wheel more



50% cycle more



Everyone should feel welcome in their neighbourhood

Improvements to neighbourhoods must also recognise the needs of adults, for example women, disabled people and people from ethnic minority groups.

53%

agree they regularly chat to their neighbours, more than just to say hello

48%

feel able to participate in making their neighbourhood a better place to live

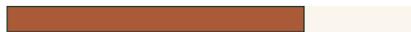
Proportion of residents that feel welcome and comfortable walking, wheeling or spending time on the streets of their neighbourhood

72%

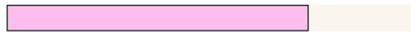
of all residents



72% of women



73% of men



67% of people who identified their gender in another way



69% of LGBTQ+ people



73% of non-LGBTQ+ people



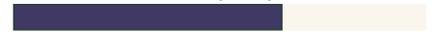
74% of people from ethnic minority groups



72% of white people



65% of disabled people



75% of non-disabled people



63% of socio-economic group DE



78% of socio-economic group AB



ii. Based on analysis by CycleStreets www.lowtrafficneighbourhoods.org. Unclassified roads are all public roads that are neither motorways, A, B nor C roads.

iii. Percentage excludes Inverness, Liverpool City Region, Peterborough data for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority and County Durham and South Tyneside for North East Combined Authority as data was not provided for these areas.

Improving walking, wheeling and cycling

Increased participation in walking, wheeling and cycling doesn't happen by chance, it happens when we plan for it.

Well-designed cycle networks separated from traffic, streets that prioritise people, and affordable, integrated transport systems make it easier and more appealing for people to get around actively.

Improving local areas in these ways connects people to the things they need, including those who can't afford other ways to get around, those who have limited mobility or those that are currently locked into using a car because they don't have other options. Being able to walk, wheel or cycle means more people can get to work, school or to the shops. It breaks down barriers and means more people can enjoy a better quality of life, while reducing the risk of lifestyle-related diseases.

In areas we surveyed, 54% of residents support shifting investment from road-building schemes to fund walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport, whilst 71% of residents surveyed supported measures such

as reducing speed limits, improving crossing points and introducing protected cycle paths in school neighbourhoods.



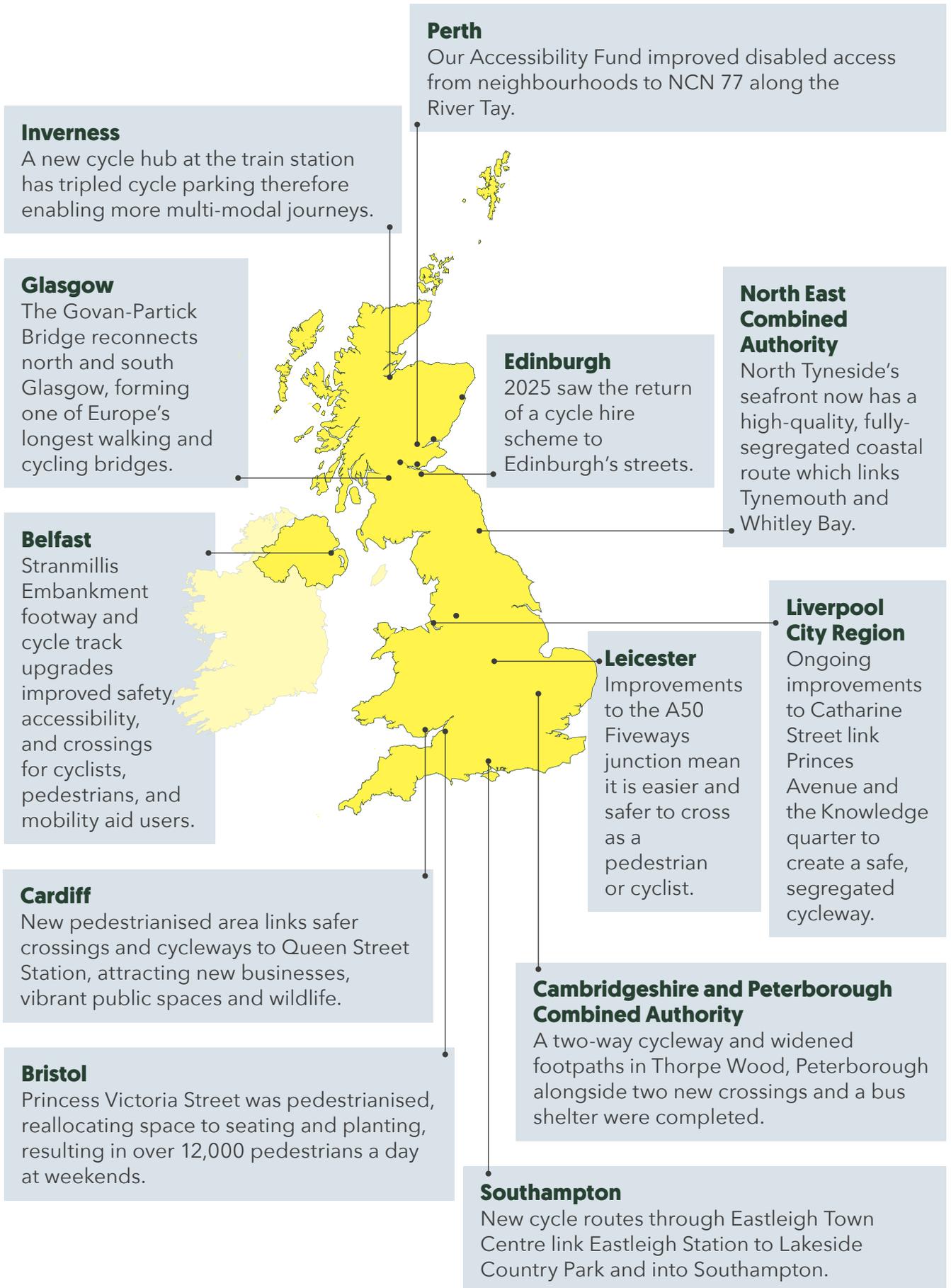
As cities and towns continue to grow, it is essential these people-powered journeys are built into new and existing developments



And there is a lot of support for more connected neighbourhoods, especially by improving and increasing off-road paths like the National Cycle Network, as well as School Streets and stopping parking on the pavement.

As cities and towns continue to grow, it is essential these people-powered journeys are built into new and existing developments. From safer journeys to school and better connections between homes and local services, to making longer journeys possible by public transport; the result is happier, healthier communities that thrive.

Recent improvements to walking, wheeling and cycling in UK Index areas



Looking forward

Better places and streets for everyone



We – both Walk Wheel Cycle Trust and our partners – want to make it possible for everyone to walk, wheel and cycle. We believe that by building people-powered movement into our daily lives, we can improve our health, our wellbeing and our world.

The 2025 Walking and Cycling Index shows excellent progress in some areas like walking and wheeling safety, while other areas like cycling participation appear to be stalling. To create the local neighbourhoods people want to see will require innovation, partnership working and investment.

Residents want more funding in their area on walking and wheeling, cycling, buses and trains in comparison to driving.

With devolution continuing to play an important role in how transport policies are implemented, local leaders are being given greater responsibility for transport in their area. This provides a fantastic opportunity to increase the pace of change in delivering places that are attractive to walk wheel and cycle.

We believe this should start with the journey to school, connecting new homes, and integrating walking, wheeling and cycling with public transport.

Safer school journeys

The Index shows most people support both School Street style closures and improved school neighbourhoods – such as with speed limit reductions, improved crossing points and protected cycle paths.

By supporting child-safe neighbourhoods, we give children the independence to roam, play and develop which in turn contributes to the creation of safe and inclusive public spaces that are accessible to all.

Percentage of residents who would like to see more government spending in their local area:

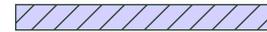
54% on walking and wheeling



43% on cycling



63% on buses



61% on trains



41% on trams



43% on other forms of public transport such as community transport, metro or subway, local ferry



37% on driving



Supporting child-safe neighbourhoods... contributes to the creation of safe and inclusive public spaces that are accessible to all

Connected housing developments

New developments are often built without safe, direct connections to the places people need to go, from healthcare services to school, work and to the shops. This locks people into car dependency. But as house building accelerates across the UK, there is a clear opportunity to design places where walking, wheeling and cycling are the easy and natural choice for everyday journeys.

Almost four out of five people support having shops, schools, green space and public transport within a short walk or wheel or their home, demonstrating the importance of embedding active travel into the planning process.

Ensuring that people-powered journeys are part of the house building process will be essential for new communities to thrive, reducing pressure on road networks and improving quality of life for everyone.

Make better connected journeys possible with public transport

For many people, journeys depend on reliable, affordable and accessible public transport. These factors become enhanced when part of an integrated system with walking, wheeling and cycling embedded.

Journeys that combine traveling by bus with walking or wheeling are common but not always accessible, safe or reliable.

From improved bus stops – which are accessible, well-lit and covered from rain – to better connections between housing estates and bus stops, the Index provides several examples that the public would like to see to make these journeys better for them.



Steve Marsland, Headteacher, Russel Scott Primary, Greater Manchester

Russell Scott has been running a School Street for three years.

We started to change the culture of the school run by advising parents and carers about the benefits of active travel and the right of all children to clean air. The children are the best advocates of School Streets – give them a voice because it's about them and their health!

The School Street has been a game changer.

Blocking off the roads around school means families are walking, scooting and cycling....and guess what? Talking to each other.

Parents are really enthusiastic and have told us that they talk more and spot things walking to school that they would never come across whilst driving.

We've fitted bike and scooter racks to encourage the children to choose active travel.

Notes on methodology

The attitudinal survey was conducted from March to June 2025 by independent social research organisation NatCen.

The survey is representative of all UK Index area residents, not just those who walk, wheel or cycle.

All other data are sourced from our regional and local partners, national data sets or modelled and calculated by Walk Wheel Cycle Trust. All locally-sourced data are correct as of 28 May 2025.

Trip estimates use a model developed by Walk Wheel Cycle Trust. When comparing to other travel surveys, some variation may exist in the proportion of journeys travelled by journey purpose.

Rounding has been used throughout the report. In many cases we have rounded to the nearest whole number. Rounding is avoided where this may cause confusion, for example with modelled estimates shown in the summary and benefits sections.

More information on data sources and calculations, including strengths and limitations of the survey and model methodology, are available at www.walkwheelcycletrust.org.uk/walking-cycling-index

Walk Wheel Cycle Trust is the charity making it possible for everyone to walk, wheel and cycle.

Because people powered movement changes everything. Our health. Our wellbeing. Our world.

www.walkwheelcycletrust.org.uk

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Walk Wheel Cycle Trust is a registered charity in the UK number 326550 (England and Cymru), SC039263 (Scotland) and 20206824 (Republic of Ireland).

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