RESEARCH SUMMARY

Title   **Development of cycle highways**

Objective   Evaluation of the Mayor's plan to encourage cycling by clearly marking out cycling routes into central London

Date   February 2009

Methodology   12 focus groups with 5 target audiences – commuter cyclists; commuters who cycle in their leisure time; non-cyclist commuters; non-cyclist non-commuters and motorists

Key findings

- The 'Cycle Highways' concept was generally received very positively. It was seen as a refreshing and ambitious initiative that would raise the profile of cycling in the capital as well as addressing some existing barriers to cycling However, some were apprehensive about ensuring that money is not 'wasted' on expensive measures aimed at a small group.

- It is also essential to understand that motorists and cyclists are not two distinct groups. Key to the success is that it is seen to encourage cycling but is not anti-driving and punishing drivers.

- All attendees preferred the option of a 1.5m cycle lane. Most were sceptical about a kerb-to-kerb painted road and felt that this would cause confusion. However, disappointment was often expressed that the scheme did not include a fully segregated lane along the entirety of the highways.

- On balance, people favoured keeping bus lanes their existing colour, but did not express a strong preference for the 'Cycle Highways' being either blue or green. Blue would have greatest impact and help differentiate them, while green would fit more with a sustainable transport strategy.

- Of the different potential elements of the concept, safety improvements were the most popular and also the most likely to bring about behavioural changes. However, some, particularly commuting cyclists, favour measures such as on-going road maintenance to provide a faster route into central London.

- For people who do not currently commute by bicycle, improving wayfinding would be of interest to help them find their way around. Others felt more secure places to leave their bicycles would be encouraging.

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