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**From:** Charles Barraball  
**Sent:** 23 March 2012  
**To:** LDF

**Subject:** Merton Cycling Campaign's response on behalf of the un-motorised to the Draft Local Development Framework 23rd March 2012

"A beacon for sustainable development in the years ahead" - or a bonfire of the vanities?

In 1991, 1995 and 2002 LB Merton started 3 major programmes to implement joined-up sustainable transport routes to form a network, and like most other London Boroughs, has shown itself incapable of delivery.

LB Merton was the first London Borough to attempt a "cycling" network and, a long time ago, embraced the principal of trying to complete one route at a time.

The first and only route attempted in one shot, the so-called East-West route, remains the most effective bit of a route in the Borough - but you need to be a brave soul, with no dependants, to join it - on foot, by bike or by wheelchair. There might have been a grand opening of this bit of a route in the 1990's, but the way through Raynes Park was never resolved effectively. And quite how does it connect West Barnes with Mitcham?

Merton Cycling Campaign has many times tried to persuade LB Merton to concentrate on one secure route at a time, but to no avail.

LB Merton has too often, for too long, used the implementation of cycling provision as a convenient way of impeding the motorist, fleecing the road-payer, and not facilitating sustainable transport journeys, a practice epitomised in the wholly irresponsible installation in Martin Way.

There is now only one transport planning strategy reasonable for LB Merton, and that is to give non-motorised people equal rights to safe passage on Merton's roads as other national and local road-payers.

In places this may be achieved at substantial cost by changing road characteristics to be more sensitive to people out of their cars. Reducing the default speed limit to 20mph, safe for all, is the simple answer, cheapest and quickest.

If this concept is difficult to grasp, LB Merton should do nothing that does not fully comply with the London Cycling Design Standards; and much time, effort, and fruitless investment will be saved.

LB Merton should advocate itself as an inclusive community space; a start could be made on addressing the hazards. Planning for a continuation of the victim-blaming culture in our public realm and public offices is a real evolutionary set-back.

**Given LB Merton's inability to achieve any acceptable, accessible, sustainable travel route across the Borough, describing Merton as having a "cycle" network is utterly ridiculous.**

The Local Development Framework of 2012 has 3 roadworks proposals maps: **Road Network Improvements, Road Junction Improvements and Cycle Network Improvements.**

This differentiation illustrates the Borough's self-delusion that cyclists, walkers and wheel-chairers have been accommodated by its networks. A self-delusion that allows Merton to claim it considers the safety of all road users. But when it comes to Road Network and Road Junction improvements does it give people equal rights to safe passage? No.

A cursory glance at the killed and seriously injured maps 2005-2010 shows the inequities.

It is necessary for LB Merton to give all people equal right to safe passage on all roads; that is what is needed. Merton does not need to nourish the divisive promotion of the idea that Merton people on wheelchairs or bicycles or on foot are accommodated by fictional "Cycle" Networks.

The map "Cycle Network Improvements" would be better entitled "**Sustainable Transport Promotion Schemes**", creating no illusion that wheeled road-payers must be safely corralled-in on all roads, and facing up to the idea that sustainable transport is to be promoted.

The justification for highlighting Merton's heritage of unsafe road layouts is that LB Merton have demonstrated repeatedly that they are not possessed of a municipal mindset that is capable of producing transportation networks.

All, inclusively, have a right to safe, sustainable, passage. And just allocation of space in the public realm that they pay for whether on foot, in a pram, with a child, with Granny, with Grandfather, in a wheelchair, with a walking stick, a zimmer frame, with crutches, on a bicycle, on a tricycle.

To allocate space in the public realm in this Jubilee year according to how much public damage (through weight, pollution, danger, impact, and speed) a privately-chosen mode of unsustainable transport causes, is iniquitous.

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<http://www.lcc.org.uk/index.asp?PageID=973> for free London cycle route maps  
<http://www.mertoncyclists.talktalk.net/monthly-beginner-rides.htm>

Merton Cycling Campaign is a local group of the London Cycling Campaign which works to improve cycling in London and also provides services to its members, including:

- \* Free third party insurance
- \* Discounts in lots of London bike shops
- \* Discounted theft insurance
- \* Free cycle-related legal advice provided by cycling-friendly solicitor
- \* Free London Cyclist magazine
- \* Leisure rides, social events and campaigns

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