

Feed: Cyclists in the City

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Subject: Top 10 dangerous junctions for cycling in London - and TfL's complete denial of reality. It needs to build safer junctions instead of fobbing us off with whitewash

Transport for London releases information about the fatalities on its roads.

One such fatality was Min Joo Lee, a student killed at Kings Cross - scene of multiple recent collisions where cyclists have been killed by HGVs. The Kings Cross Local Environment blog described what happened: "[A young woman cyclist on her second day of term at CSM was brutally mown down by a lorry at the York Way, Pentonville Road junction complex. This excellent un-nerving post by Olaf Storbeck over at Cycling Intelligence covers it from a cyclist perspective, \[The Guardian\]\(#\) also covers it. TfL is well used to cyclists being killed at its badly designed junctions.](#)"

[Kings Cross Local Environment](#) is following the case. More specifically, the authors of the blog are preparing to consider raising a case of corporate manslaughter against Transport for London at this particular junction. They have my complete support.

Earlier this week, I saw a copy of Transport for London's fatalities spreadsheet. The case of Joo Lee is included in the spreadsheet and described like this: **"Cyclist in stream of traffic and apparently weaving in and out of lanes, is struck by front of tipper lorry."**



New Cycle Super Highway - full of motor vehicles

Does this encourage safe cycling?

To me this reads like victim-blaming. You get killed by an HGV? Your fault for weaving in and out of the lanes.

But to be honest, it's almost impossible not to 'weave' in and out of motor traffic in London, isn't it? In fact, I think Transport for London actively forces you to 'weave' in and out of motor traffic on a bicycle. Here's why:

Pictured left, is the a newly-designed junction on a Boris Johnson Cycle Super Highway in Pimlico. Back in [April, I wrote how this Super Highway was a death waiting to happen](#). Transport for London objected. They sent someone to accompany me on a visit to the

junction. I distinctly remember the man from TfL looking at the scene in the picture and saying it's fine for cycling because there won't be many motor vehicles in the cycle lane. But just look at it. Other people have called these cycle lanes 'ghost cycle lanes' before. For the simple reason that they are actually motor vehicle lanes painted blue. Just look at the scene - there are loads of motor vehicles in the cycle lane. The motor vehicles are turning left and the cycles generally going straight on. There's actually no space for you to cycle in the cycle lane. So, if you don't want to get knocked over by a motor vehicle turning left, you're safer to cycle between the lanes of motor vehicles. So, this TfL cycle lane actually makes you 'weave' between motor lanes, the same way Min Joo Lee had to 'weave' between motor vehicles before she was killed. Yet, this is what the road layout forces most cyclists to do here.

As I wrote back in the spring, [what flummoxes me is that TfL knows that accidents happen mainly at junctions. And junctions are where the Cycle Super Highways are a consistent let-down.](#)



Another 'ghost cycle lane' filled with HGV and bus.
How is it possible to cycle here without 'weaving' between motor traffic?

Here's the scene (picture left) at another completely useless piece of cycling infrastructure - the Cycle Super Highway into the City of London on Southwark Bridge Road. The blue lane is the cycle lane. It's underneath an HGV and a bus. Where exactly are you supposed to cycle? The only option is to a) get off and walk or b) keep moving by 'weaving' between lanes? Get killed here? It will be your fault.

The fact is, Transport for London is designing facilities for cycling that are completely and utterly unusable. Which is why cyclists don't use them. They simply can't. So they are forced by Transport for London to 'weave' in between streams of traffic, just the same way Min Joo Lee might have been when she was killed by an HGV. And if they happen to get killed by an HGV, TfL will issue a fatality statement that suggests the cyclist was at fault.

I'm absolutely fuming about this. I think TfL should be held to account for its policy of 'smoothing the traffic flow' - bureaucracy-speak for making London's junctions into places where motor vehicles get through as efficiently as possible but screws everyone else whether they are on foot or on a bicycle - that I believe is killing people. And so I fully

support the moves by the authors of the Kings Cross Local Environment blog to do just that. But the issue is London-wide, not just at Kings Cross.

Last week, Labour Assembly Member Val Shawcross asked the Mayor why there had been a 9.2% increase in cycling accidents last year. TfL listed the 10 most dangerous junctions for cyclists in London. And then published some completely withering twaddle about how they're being made safer for cycling.

Read the list below. See if you think TfL is really making London's killer junctions safer for cycling?

I think this reads like a list of feeble platitudes. Most of these safety changes are just tiny bits of tinkering here and there. And the design of some of the new cycle super highways is simply farcical. For example, at Vauxhall, you'll be expected to cycle directly across five lanes of traffic into the far right lane. Hardly safe cycling design is it?

Nothing is really being done to make it safer to cycle through London's killer junctions. Have a read of the Mayor and TfL's responses. Do these answers make you feel that the Mayor is taking cycling seriously or does it make you feel you are being fobbed off with whitewash and that nothing is going to change?

Question No: 2996 / 2011 Valerie Shawcross:

[When asked at MQT about the 9.2% increase in cycling accidents in the previous year you referred to the TfL Cycle Safety Action Plan. Has TfL identified within the Cycle Safety Action Plan where and when collisions involving cyclists are most likely to occur? Please publish a table showing the ten most dangerous locations to cyclists in London, say which is the highways authority at that location and what actions TfL are taking to reduce the dangers to cyclists at each?.](#)

Written response from the Mayor:

The locations with the highest number of cycle collisions in the GLA area between 2008 and 2010 are shown in the table below. These are on some of the busiest cycle routes in London and, as such, the number of collisions is generally proportionate to the number of cyclists in these locations. No fatal collisions occurred at any of these locations and at least 85 per cent of the collisions at all ten locations resulted in slight injuries, which did not require hospital treatment.

The table below indicates the specific infrastructure improvements which are taking place at each location. However, infrastructure improvements alone are not enough to improve cycle safety as collisions involving cyclists are not always concentrated at particular locations. TfL is therefore working with the London boroughs and the Cycle Safety Working Group to deliver other safety improvements such as education campaigns, better vehicle safety technology for freight vehicles and cycle training.

Location Borough Highway Authority Action being taken

1. St. George's Road/London Road/ Elephant & Castle Junction Southwark TfL An alternative route for cyclists was implemented at this location as part of Cycle Superhighway 7.
2. Clapham Road/ Kennington Park Road/ Camberwell Road Junction Lambeth TfL Safety improvements were introduced at this junction as part of Barclays Cycle Superhighway Route 7 (CSH7). Barclays Cycle Superhighway Route 5 will run east-west through Oval junction on the A202, and will deliver further safety improvements for cyclists.
3. Strand/Northumberland Avenue/Whitehall Junction Westminster Borough Westminster City Council has identified £878,000 of Local Implementation Plan funding for safety schemes throughout Westminster. I have asked TfL officers to engage with the borough to ensure that this location is considered for improvements.
4. Waterloo Road/ Stamford St/ York Road Junction Lambeth TfL Plans are being developed to improve signage in this area in order to provide cyclists with information about safe routes to Waterloo station that provide an alternative to navigating the roundabout at this junction.
5. Mansion House St/Princes St/ Threadneedle St Junction City of London Borough The City of London has three funded programmes in its Local Implementation Plan which will contribute to improving safety for cyclists throughout the 'Square Mile'. I have asked TfL officers to liaise with the City of London to determine whether this location should be prioritised for improvements.
6. Elephant & Castle/Newington Butts Roundabout Southwark TfL Works to convert the roundabout to a signalised junction were undertaken between June 2010 and May 2011. Advance Stop Lines, Toucan crossings and shared use pavements were provided on all arms of the junction.
7. Hyde Park Corner Westminster TfL As part of the Barclays Cycle Superhighways (CSH) Programme, cycling improvements are being considered at Hyde Park Corner, which will see Route 9 terminating at the roundabout. These proposals are still in the early stages of planning and are not yet confirmed.
8. Millbank/Lambeth Bridge Junction Westminster TfL CSH 8 has been implemented on Grosvenor Rd and Milbank, and mandatory cycle lanes installed on entry and exit at the Millbank arm with Lambeth Bridge to improve cycling safety at the roundabout. In addition cycle measures were incorporated in the recently resurfaced Lambeth Bridge. These included widening the westbound mandatory cycle lane.
9. Clerkenwell Road/Farringdon Road Junction Islington TfL Cycle measures have been implemented at this junction primarily by London Borough of Islington catering for the heavy east to west cycle movement.
10. Albert Embankment/Kennington Lane/ Wandsworth Road Junction Lambeth TfL CSH 5 will run through Vauxhall Gyratory on the A202 and will provide a safer route for cyclists.

Planned improvements include new sections of cycle lane, blind spot visibility mirrors, and changes to traffic islands and kerblines to reduce traffic speeds and improve safety.

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