

Greater Manchester's Big Active Conversation

5 June 2023



Foreword from Dame Sarah Storey

Launching the region's intention to work towards the adoption of Vision Zero in Greater Manchester, demonstrated the continued momentum and commitment there is towards road danger reduction in Greater Manchester.

With road danger being cited as the single biggest reason for people not choosing to walk, wheel or cycle, this must remain a key focus of the work everyone is doing.

Alongside the Transport Commissioner, Vernon Everitt and a panel of experts, the on-stage discussion provided important insight into why this particular pillar of my refreshed mission is so vital towards securing the success of the other recommendations.

The other key headline is how this work is fundamental to ensuring universal accessibility. If people living, working or visiting Greater Manchester are going to have genuine choice in the way that they travel in the region, then safety is the highest priority.

Dame Sarah Storey

Active Travel Commissioner
for Greater Manchester



“ If people are going to have genuine choice in the way that they travel in the region, then safety is the highest priority. ”

Foreword from Councillor Jackson

We are a progressive authority and will continue to deliver 'Vision Zero' across the borough, linking in with Population Health, Children's Services and our Economic Growth Team to make our communities stronger.

By planning to build more advanced infrastructure we hope this will improve people's lives, as people may move more, more often and live happier, healthier lifestyles. It was also great to showcase some of Tameside's Active Travel opportunities to the event delegates from across the region.

Councillor Jan Jackson

Tameside Council, Executive Member
for Planning, Transport and Connectivity

“We hope this will improve people's lives, as people may move more, more often and live happier, healthier lifestyles.”



Big Active Conversation Overview

Greater Manchester's Big Active Conversation (BAC) continued on 5 June 2023, at Village Hotels in Ashton, Tameside.

The event brought together over 150 people and partners across Greater Manchester (GM) to learn, collaborate, share ideas, challenges and expertise as we work together to make GM a better place for everyone to walk, cycle, wheel and to live an active life.

This event was six months on from our **last BAC** which took place on 1 November 2022, and saw Dame Sarah Storey unveil a **refreshed active travel mission for GM**, built upon three foundations – our ABC: Accessibility, Behaviour Change and Communications and Stakeholder Engagement. The mission also set out five key priorities to drive the work and focus of active travel over the coming years and ten recommendations on how this will be delivered.

Updating on progress to achieving the mission, Dame Sarah Storey set out GM's intention to eliminate deaths and serious injuries on the city-region's roads through 'Vision Zero'. Dame Sarah announced that road danger reduction experts, Agilysis, has been commissioned to develop the strategy in the coming months. Through Vision Zero the city region will become a safer, healthier, and more sustainable place for pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and motorists.

Following the announcement, Dame Sarah welcomed guest speakers to share their **local experience and stories of walking, wheeling and cycling**. Dame Sarah was later joined by Transport Commissioner, Vernon Everitt, and other guests in a **panel question and answer session**.

Topics that were raised in the panel question and answer session were further explored through a series of engagement workshops.



Accessibility:

Active travel in Greater Manchester must be inclusive, universally accessible and built to consistent standards that meet and exceed local and national standards. That means providing appropriate infrastructure, adaptations and indeed space on our streets.



Behaviour Change:

We're building on Greater Manchester's Right Mix target to help people walk, wheel and cycle more, and crucially, reduce the number of trips made by car and other non-sustainable modes.



Communications and Stakeholder Engagement:

To deliver on A and B, we will promote transparent and simplified communication lines for schemes at all stages of development and delivery.

The five key priorities

Under the mission, there are five key priorities that will drive the work and focus of active travel over the coming years:

1 Infrastructure delivery

At the heart of the strategy is the building of a universally accessible, coherent and connected network for Greater Manchester.

2 Home to school travel

Ensure education establishments across the region are provided with the tools to engage with every option available to support our youngest members of society.

3 Cycle hire and access to cycles

Support the development of the cycle hire and bike libraries schemes that have launched across the city region, to give communities and individuals access to cycles and adapted bikes.

4 Integration with public transport

Ensure that stops and interchanges are easy and safe to walk, wheel and cycle to. Passenger experience is the highest priority, so we want to make it easy to “Get On Board” from start to finish.

5 Road danger reduction

Greater Manchester to adopt Vision Zero where the target is no deaths and severe injuries on Greater Manchester’s roads.

Further details about Greater Manchester’s refreshed Active Travel Mission can be accessed [here](#).

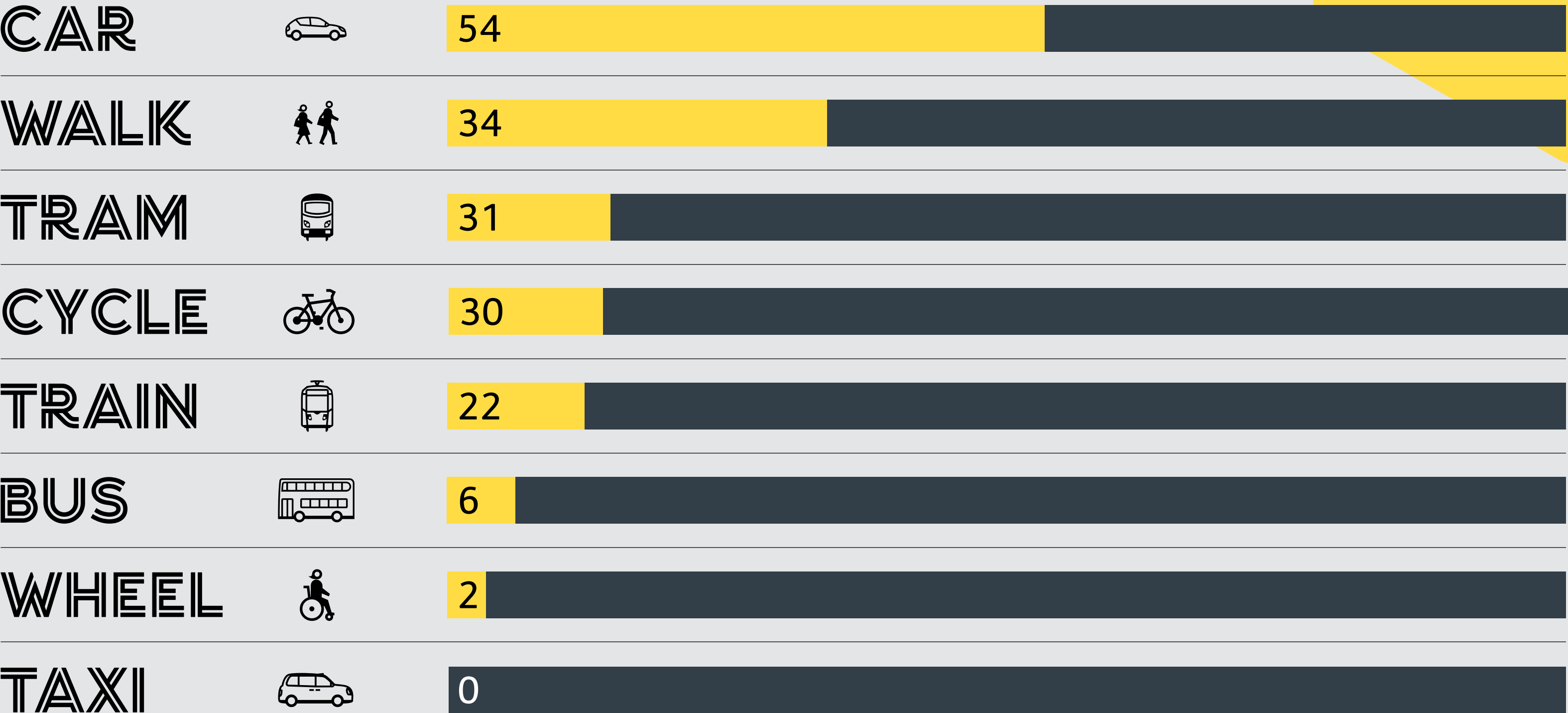


Throughout the event attendees were invited to share their thoughts via an interactive platform called Mentimeter. At the start of the event, participants were asked:

Where in GM are you most connected to?



How did you travel here today?



Walking, wheeling or cycling – what's stopping Greater Manchester?

Barriers to Cycling

POOR BIKE LANES

LACK OF AMBITION

Cars cars cars

TRAFFIC

WEATHER

CAPABILITY

Bike parking

HILLS

The A6 Drivers

Funding

Attitudes

Politics

EQUIPMENT

BIKE THEFT

Awareness

SAFETY HABITS

MONEY

CONFIDENCE

NERVES

DESIRE TO CHANGE

MOTORISTS

MINDSET

MOTIVATION

RESOURCES

Bike ownership

Dress code

CAR CULTURE

Please use three words to describe how you are feeling ahead of today's BAC



Active Travel mission progress update

Updating on progress to achieving the Active Travel mission, including the latest on Vision Zero, Dame Sarah Storey said:

It's heart-breaking to learn of a fatal or life-changing collision and sadly there have been some horrendous incidents very recently right on our doorstep. These incidents are neither acceptable or inevitable, and we should all be doing everything we can to prevent them.

Back in November I launched a refreshed mission for Greater Manchester's active travel programme and within that I recommended the region adopt Vision Zero.

Today's announcement is the first step in making that a reality and I hope the work that now follows will pave the way in making everyone feel safe when they take to the roads, whether that be in a car, on foot or on a bike.

Getting it right will require a collective effort and commitment by everyone, which is why I am delighted to have Agilysis on board as we start our journey today.

Dame Sarah Storey

Active Travel Commissioner
for Greater Manchester

“Getting it right will require a collective effort and commitment by everyone.”



Shining a spotlight on what's happening on the ground

Shining a spotlight on what's happening on the ground: local experience and stories of walking, wheeling & cycling

Host: Eve Holt (Strategic Director GM Moving)

A showcase of videos and talks highlighted what has been happening on the ground over the last 6–12 months and people's hopes for the next 12 months.

To mark World Bicycle Day and the start of Bike Week there was a focus on projects that have been increasing access and participation to cycling. Videos that were shown to attendees at the Big Active Conversation are linked below.

Showcase:

WalkRideGM led a **cycle safari** to test out new cycling infrastructure in Manchester, Trafford and Salford.

The Seashell Trust, Stockport, have a **new cycle track** & enjoyed a **visit from Chris Boardman**, Chair Sport England, to see it in action.



GM Walking facilitated the **GM Walking Festival**, through the month of May, as national walking month. There were over 350 organised walks across GM, with over 4000 people walking and wheeling, to include people with buggies, wheelchairs and other mobility aids.



Tameside Council have been working with McrBikeKitchen to get **second hand bikes repaired** and out in the community to increase access to affordable bicycles for local people.

Chorlton Bike Deliveries Coop have continued to grow, with a mix of paid and volunteer staff providing **bike deliveries** for the NHS, **local traders**, charities and people and have successfully established a new **Cycling Without Age project**, enabling people with dementia, limited mobility and long term illnesses to experience the joy of cycling.



Various community cycling groups and ride leaders came together to organise and lead Manchester **Kidical Mass cycle ride**.

Various women's community cycling groups came together to organise and lead **Manchester Critical Lass ride** on International Women's Day.

Shining a spotlight on what's happening on the ground continued

Spotlight speakers:

- **Atchara Khonglim**
Tameside Women's Community Cycling Group
- **Belinda Everett**
Founder of Bee Pedal Ready and Greater Manchester's Bicycle Mayor, BYCS
- **Debbie Witton**
Chorlton Bike Deliveries
- **Hayley McCaffer**
Tameside Council
- **Oliver Mirtorabi**
Deputy Chair of the GM Youth Combined Authority
- **Sumayra Ahmad**
Station South bike station and her daughter Hannah-Elise
- **Wesley Ratcliff,**
The Seashell Trust

To end the Shining a Spotlight session, Dame Sarah Storey presented Belinda Everett, the new GM Bicycle Mayor, with her mayoral chains.

As Bicycle Mayor, Belinda Everett will join an **international network of Bicycle Mayors** who work collaboratively with their communities to

make cities more liveable for the future. Bicycle Mayors act as a catalyst representing cycling progress and the interests of their communities.

To learn more about Belinda's plans in GM **click here**. Working alongside Belinda, GM's Youth Bicycle Mayor, Brooke Barker, will offer a young person's perspective to help make a difference in GM.



Panel discussion

Facilitated by panel host, Jacey Normand (Chair of Downtown in Business Manchester), panel members were invited to discuss and respond to pre-submitted questions from members of the audience and wider public. Panel members included:

- **Dame Sarah Storey**
Active Travel Commissioner for Greater Manchester, GMCA
- **Vernon Everitt**
Transport Commissioner for Greater Manchester, GMCA
- **Kate Green**
Deputy Mayor of Greater Manchester, Police, Crime, Criminal Justice and Fire
- **Cllr Jan Jackson**
Executive Member for Planning, Transport and Connectivity, Tameside Council
- **Steve Connor**
Founder and Director of Creative Concern and Green Lead, Greater Manchester's Business Board
- **Sukky Choongh**
Environmental Manager - Air Quality and Ultra Low Emission Vehicles at Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT)

The following questions were addressed by panel members:

1. What more can be done to protect cyclists from negative attitudes and behaviours?

Answered by Vernon Everitt (VE), Sukky Choongh (SC) and Kate Green (KG)

VE: It's a shared responsibility for everyone to make the roads safer. We need to remove the points of conflict about using the roads, which lead to those attitudes and behaviours, and we need to look after each other.

SC: Nobody owns the roads, they belong to all of us, and we must consider commercial users, kerb spaces, wider pavements and cycle lanes and not just think about them in isolation.

KG: There needs to be a joint effort across communities to address problems and find common shared solutions. With our new neighbourhood Police roles, we can work with commuters and find out where it's safe or find the dangerous junctions. We can work together to identify the hot spots and danger zones. It's not cyclists vs road users.



Panel discussion continued

2. Do you think that the toxification of the public debate around certain policy interventions that restrict car use are part of the problem in the slow pace of change to increase active travel, or are the biggest barriers to achieving the changes we need to see more practical?

Answered by Dame Sarah Storey (DSS), Steve Connor (SCo), Sukky Choongh (SC) and Vernon Everitt (VE)

DSS: There is a huge role for the media to settle it and not make it so toxic. Everyone will still be able to drive if they want but people should also be able to walk, cycle and wheel but we have to make it safer. At the moment there are areas where you can't use safely and there are still inaccessible places around.

SCo: We need to paint a clear picture of where we are going, ensure we pitch that we are headed for net zero. A longer-term dialogue will help people to let go of their cars. We are way behind on emissions targets, how we travel around is our second largest footprint. Targets should be higher and bolder, and we need to decouple economic growth from vehicles (cars).

SC: We have to consider the manufacturing of vehicles, sales overseas and status symbol of

cars in this country. We are having to now undo the infrastructure that was made for cars and become multi model where you can cycle, use the Metrolink and walk. It needs to be safe, accessible and ticketing needs to be quick and easy. People need to feel confident that the bus is going to take them where they need to go and get them there on time. Only then can we divorce our car.

VE: Public transport in Greater Manchester is on the cusp of transformation, it started in London in 2000 and we now have it in Greater Manchester, with a Mayor and 10 Leaders committed to active travel. The Bee Network is about to take off, but the pace is about integrating the whole system, which includes all the threads such as ticketing, hearing loops¹ and weekly fare caps.

¹A hearing loop (sometimes called an audio induction loop) is a special type of sound system for use by people with hearing aids.



Panel discussion continued

3. If budget wasn't an issue, what single or combination of factors do you believe would have the biggest impact on changing people's behaviour towards using more sustainable forms of transport.

Answered by Dame Sarah Storey (DSS), Kate Green (KG), Sukky Choongh (SC) and Vernon Everitt (VE)

DSS: Infrastructure is the number one priority, but we also need more people in police and fire to help keep us safe. We need more money to make sure rail services work and take the larger vehicles off the road.

KG: If something is hard, people are less likely to do something, so infrastructure is important. We need to tell people about Active Travel options, people need to know they're going to be safe, at night and on lonely cycle lanes, we need to make sure that the active travel infrastructure is safe.

SC: There should be a hierarchy on roads to protect people, e.g. set times for certain activity (vehicles) on the roads as well as pedestrianised times.

VE: We need to make bus services as "turn up and go" services –that would encourage more people to get the bus. Reduce the cost, make things affordable, so that riding

a bus should be the first resort because it's easier and more affordable than driving.

4. How do you aim to target people with little interest in this agenda/those who are resistant to change?

Answered by Steve Connor (SCo) and Dame Sarah Storey (DSS)

SCo: It's completely feasible that business can stand in the way of change, for example, the congestion charge was fought bitterly. We have to take businesses on this journey with us. We need to talk more about the Bee Network & provide businesses with a solution to show that it's worth it.

DSS: We need to have options, e.g. Bee Bikes and/or public transport when weather is bad. When it's easy and we have a better infrastructure, the biggest barrier is confidence that others are looking out for you on the road in bad weather, segregated from traffic, knowing you are safe. Consideration is needed on hubs, e.g. dry space, more space for parking, the right sort of parking and to know that your bike will still be there when you return.



Panel discussion continued

5. Over the next 10–20 years we will see a rapid escalation of the triple crises –Environment, Economy and Energy. Active travel is clearly a key component of a resilient healthy ‘garden’ city. While progress is being made in GM, time is running short, and the car still dominates our commons. How can we increase the ambition, and the action?

Answered by Councillor Jackson (CJ)

CJ: We need to reach out to schools –the younger generation to educate the older generation on home to school travel. Affordability is a barrier, but we need to change the mindset. We need to sit with planners to check that they have accommodated wider pavements for prams and wheelchairs, access to major road links and incorporated active travel. As we grow the economy, we need to grow active travel by helping with costs, maybe bike sharing –businesses need to encourage people to travel to work more actively. Local councillors need to be engaging with residents and making active travel more important with the knowledge and expertise that they have.

6. Salford offers miles of excellent off-road walking and cycling on the Salford Looplines. While they are relatively popular, sometimes they can feel quite quiet and isolated from my perspective as a man, and I imagine it would be far more of a concern if I were a lone woman. Are there any plans to improve CCTV/lighting along off-road active travel routes in GM to make them a viable option for all people during the darker winter months?

Answered by Kate Green (KG)

KG: It is crucial that we make safe forms of travel. Cycle lanes and walkways, have CCTV that look at the dark corners. We need to address the sense of fear of violence, harassment and antisocial behaviour and boost resources, physical police presence and deal with it. For late night workers to get home safely, plans need to be in place, we need safer streets funding and to find the hotspots.



Engagement workshops

Following the introductory presentations, event participants were invited to break out into workshop sessions. Eight workshops were delivered during the event by representatives from TfGM and partner organisations. Workshops covered topics relevant to walking, wheeling and cycling in Greater Manchester. The following workshops were delivered:

- **How do we engage the public about Vision Zero and how can you help? (TfGM)**
- **Adapted cycle taster session (Active Tameside and Cycling UK)**
- **Behaviour change walkshop: taking a gendered lens on our streets (GreaterSport)**
- **Striving for net zero: businesses and active travel (Bee Net Zero and TfGM)**
- **Streets for All design guide (TfGM)**
- **Activating the school run (TfGM)**
- **Community engagement: tips, tools and exploration (GM Moving, GreaterSport, WalkRideGM)**
- **Changing behaviours to enable more active travel (Tameside Council and Cycling UK)**



How do we engage the public about Vision Zero and how can you help?

Workshop leads:

- **Julie Reide**
Road Danger Reduction Manager at TfGM
- **Richard Owen**
CEO at Agilysis

Hosted by Safer Roads and Agilysis, the Vision Zero workshop looked at what road danger reduction means and gave a demonstration on how to fill out a high-level road danger risk assessment for delegates to take away and complete in their areas.

Summary of key points:

- Agilysis have been commissioned to write the Vision Zero strategy for Greater Manchester.
- When looking at road risks, there needs to be a change of thinking and decision-makers need to ensure that public perception of risk is considered. More incentives may encourage motorists to use public transport more often. During the workshop delegates carried out a road danger reduction assessment sheet focusing on a key location. This assessment encouraged delegates to assess the site, risks, what made them feel unsafe and what made them feel comfortable.
- Delegates also took a copy of the high-level road danger risk assessment home with them to complete their own assessments in their relevant areas and then feedback to the road safety inbox.



Adapted cycle taster session



Workshop leads:

- **Simon Ward and Benjamin Porter**
Cycling UK
- **Emily Wilks-Pulido**
Wheels for All

Hosted by Tameside Council, Active Tameside, Cycling UK and Wheels for All, this session enabled delegates to visit Tameside Cycle Circuit to experience some of the cycling facilities and activities on offer in the borough. Delegates walked to and from the circuit, which is a 15 minute journey from the venue. This route included examples of recent infrastructure improvements for people walking, wheeling or cycling, and discussions on the challenges we face when encouraging behaviour change towards active travel.

An inclusive cycling session delivered by Active Tameside was taking place at the circuit during the workshop, allowing delegates to see the circuit in action and meet residents who use the facility. Cycling UK and Wheels for All provided delegates with a large selection of e-bikes, e-trikes and adapted cycles that delegates could sample. Dame Sarah Storey and Trafford Council Leader, Cllr Tom Ross, also attended the workshop, joining delegates in trying out the various cycles on offer.



Adapted cycle taster session continued

Summary of key points:

- The route to the cycle circuit included a range of active travel measures that are located near the venue, including dedicated cycle and pedestrian lanes.
- There were discussions along the walking route about the challenges of space sharing and highways being safe for adapted cycles. Delegates discussed the risk of and safety from busy traffic in the area and at crossings, especially for vulnerable road users and people with visual impairments.
- Active Tameside gave a short presentation to inform delegates of the type of sessions delivered at the track and the diverse groups attending the circuit and engaging in physical activity.
- Delegates tried several electric and adapted cycles and gained a greater understanding of the differences between adapted machines and standard cycles. This led to further discussion around the need for infrastructure improvements across GM to facilitate adapted cycle users and to navigate safely across the city-region.
- Storage, especially for the non-standard cycles,

is a barrier. More innovative use of spaces in the local community for cycle storage is needed.

- Participants were overall very positive about the Making Cycling E-asier scheme, and the significance of changing our behaviour on how we make journeys has never been more important in the current climate.
- For more information about Making Cycling E-asier please visit [Manchester Making Cycling E -asier booking | Cycling UK.](#)



Behaviour change workshop: taking a gendered lens on our streets

Right to the Streets

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Workshop leads:

- **Kelly Rodgers**
Strategic Lead for Healthy Active Places,
GM Moving
- **Imogen Halls**
Project Lead for the Right to the
Streets project, GM Moving
- **Eve Holt**
Strategic Director, GM Moving

Hosted by GM Moving colleagues, this workshop used two interactive games to explore how the physical environment and use of space influences our experiences and perceptions of safety and belonging in our communities through a gendered lens. This is part of the Right to the Streets project in North Trafford that focuses on creating safe and joyful public spaces where everyone is welcome and invited to be active.

**Given a whole new
perspective on public space.**

Participant feedback

Summary of key points:

- Discussions highlighted the importance of understanding how the physical environment affects our lived experience of safety and belonging.
- There's a need to develop and embed a gendered perspective when talking about urban design and public spaces.
- Safety is a shared responsibility, and we all need to think about the role we can play to make spaces inclusive, safe, and welcoming for everyone.
- Talking about important issues can be fun with the right tools! The workshop demonstrated that games could help spark discussions and get people thinking from a different perspective.
- To facilitate change there needs to be opportunities for collaboration between individuals/organisations in the community and policy-makers.
- To develop a sense of community ownership, we need to engage in co-design processes and work with local people and networks to encourage local ownership of streets.

This workshop was a really good eye opener – heard people talking about things I hadn't thought about before.

Participant feedback

- To find out more about the Right to the Streets project follow @righttothestreets_ on Instagram. If you'd like to be added to the project mailing list, please email imogen@gmmoving.co.uk



Striving for net zero: business and active travel

Workshop leads:

- **Emma Flinn**
Head of Partnerships, Engagement and Inclusion at TfGM
- **Sophie Bullock**
Partnerships and Engagement Officer

Hosted by TfGM, this workshop explored what role businesses have to play en route to Greater Manchester's ambitious target for becoming carbon neutral by 2038, and how encouraging employees to choose active travel will play a major part in reaching this. The group discussed how TfGM and the Bee Net Zero partnership (the city region's business partnership aimed at making Greater Manchester the easiest place for a business to reach net zero) could improve its own messaging and communications to help businesses be a part of this ambition.

This workshop took the form of a panel and roundtable with Transport Commissioner, Vernon Everitt; Steve Connor, Founder and Director of Creative Concern, and Board Member of the Greater Manchester Business Board; and Zac Baker, Data Scientist at Naimuri.

Summary of key points:

- Discussions highlighted the importance of businesses tackling net zero as a co-operative community, where its range of needs should be supported through effective signposting and collaboration in order to reach the shared goal of a green transition.
- The workshop demonstrated the variety of issues that are important to businesses when considering how communications on carbon neutrality could cut through. At its core, a fair and just transition was cited as a crucial part of the strategy to bring businesses and communities along on this journey by addressing the themes of climate justice, economic opportunity, health and inequalities.
- At the individual level, good practice was shared about how businesses could make it as easy as possible to change commuting behaviour. Gaining a better understanding of travel behaviour and perceptions was seen as a first step to ground any future interventions in evidence. Also, using a range of approaches to encourage people to travel differently, and cementing transport into the companies' policies and procedures, could be utilised as hard and soft ways to encourage

employees to travel sustainably and reach broader corporate sustainability goals.

- Evidencing the scale of the challenge was also key to communicating with businesses at a city-region level. Understanding the barriers to sustainable transport along cross-sections such as geography, business size and sector, is critical to understanding the best approaches to support different business's needs, and the order and timescales of which changes could be made that do not negatively impact certain groups.



Streets for All design guide

Workshop leads:

- **Lily Feasby**
Development Officer, TfGM
- **Faye Roberts**
Strategic Planning, TfGM

Hosted by TfGM, this workshop focused on the Streets for All Design Guide and vision, principles and technical detail of good street design. Streets for All supports our place-based agenda as well as achieving our ambition for more travel by walking, cycling and public transport, which will help us tackle our most pressing economic, environmental, quality of life and innovation challenges. Universal accessibility is at the heart of the guide. Streets should enable everyone, regardless of age, ability, or vehicle availability, to move, to meet, to engage with their local communities and take advantage of all opportunities.



Streets for All design guide continued

Summary of key points:

- The Design Guide aims to assist everyone involved in the (re)design of our streets, provide design options and set out best practice, bring together existing national standards, and national and local guidance on street design and help to deliver on “Refresh the Mission” foundations and priorities.
- There are 7 Streets for All essential principles to create healthy and happy streets.
- The workshop included a brief introduction to Streets for All, a group exercise based around designing a universally accessible street, and an opportunity for attendees to provide feedback on the draft ‘Transforming a street’ chapter. The workshop was based on participants discussion on three street types, a High Street, a Residential Street and a Connector Street. Groups were provided with design standards, a street cross section and plan, a context brief e.g. traffic flows and existing accessibility issues, and things to consider e.g. design responsibility hierarchy, etc and were asked to look at how they could apply the principles to design a universally accessible and context-responsive street.
- The groups used this information to understand the different users and uses of the street which then led to consideration about total amount of space firstly and how this is allocated to different users whilst also considering the street type and its function based on the hierarchy. This led to consideration of issues including:
 - change of carriageway widths and numbers in in either direction,
 - potential introduction of dedicated cycle or bus lanes,
 - additional crossing facilities,
 - reduced speed limits,
 - retaining trees and providing additional greenery.
- There was a feedback session on each group’s re-designed street and their justification for their design choices. Some groups found the exercise challenging when making design choices to balance the different needs of people and uses of the street within a limited cross-section. This was followed by a feedback session by the facilitators comparing the TfGM approach to those locations in the draft ‘Transforming the street’ chapter.
- The main takeaways are that streets are complex places with many different, and sometimes competing, calls made upon their limited space. It is important to design streets in a people and context centred way to understand and balance the diverse needs of different uses and users of our streets.



Activating the school run



Workshop leads:

- **Nick Fairclough**
Senior Policy Manager, TfGM
- **Sam Knight**
Policy Officer, TfGM
- **Elizabeth Saul**
Senior Active Travel Officer, TfGM

Hosted by Transport for Greater Manchester, this session explored how schools, parents, communities, local authorities and TfGM can travel to school in more sustainable ways. This included discussion of how best to engage with young people, schools and local communities to transform the school run to make it a healthier, greener, and more enjoyable experience.

Summary of key points:

- There was a discussion around the challenges of implementing and sustaining school streets, particularly where they are reliant on the support of volunteers. It was suggested that ANPR (automatic number plate recognition) could be used to remove the need for significant numbers of volunteers. It was also suggested that there should be rewards for volunteers, to recognise their efforts.
- Community engagement is required to legitimise the creation of new school streets. The involvement of volunteers supports this approach.
- The limited resource available for enforcement was identified as a particular barrier to safer streets around schools.
- Attendees expressed a desire for existing school streets to be made permanent and for more to be installed.
- The need for parents to 'trip chain' and a lack of integrated transport was identified as a particular issue preventing greater use of active modes to travel to school.
- There is a clear call for urgent action to support existing initiatives and make active travel safer for those currently using it to get to and from school.

Community engagement: tips, tools and exploration

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Workshop Lead:

- **Claire Stocks**
Walk Ride GM
- **Louise Robbins**
GM Moving

Hosted by WalkRideGM and GM Moving, this session explored ways of thinking about change, models of engagement and examples of best practice from across Greater Manchester, as well as a new eight-point checklist on key elements of quality engagement.

By studying examples of engagement, we drew out key elements of success and presented them in a checklist. Attendees were invited to reflect on each of these check list items in their own work, and rank from 0–10 to what degree they were able to adopt each one (0 being impossible and 10 as already doing as part of business as usual).

The checklist included:

1. Be open and honest.
2. Nurture relationships.
3. Be present (in place).
4. Clarify goals.
5. Share progress.
6. Engage end to end, transparently.
7. Listen, learn and adapt.
8. Commit to resource all of the above!



Community engagement: tips, tools and exploration continued

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Summary of key points:

Participants discussed the following check-list items.

1. Open and Honest

- Those delivering engagement activities often hold back from being fully open as they're conscious of negative reactions. In turn this can have an impact on joint goal setting.
- Participants agreed there will always be disagreement about proposals even with strong engagement approaches and it's important to ensure all views are represented and used to inform conclusions.
- Managing expectations is key to promoting honesty and transparency with communities we're engaging with.

2. Be present

- Participants felt that in person engagement provides more opportunity to hear from range of voices.

3. Clarify goals

- Participants discussed the importance of valuing individual feedback from engagement participants. Often individual perspectives get lost amongst more collective perspectives and discussions.

4. Share progress

- Communication and progress updates of any project that's been informed by engagement should be threaded throughout all the check-list elements.

5. End to end transparency

- "You said, we did" summaries are useful when demonstrating how engagement feedback and insight has been applied to project delivery.



Community engagement: tips, tools and exploration continued

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Participants also suggested that “accessibility” needs to be added to the checklist and suggested that resources need to be available in a range of formats so that they’re accessible to everyone, including disabled people and those who speak English as a second language.

To build the engagement resource further, participants recommended:

- Develop capacity to roll out resources, such as the engagement checklist, a case study template and examples of best practice, out to different organisations.
- Develop materials and toolkits to support engagement facilitators, including guidance around conflict management and a wider range of case studies.
- Hold peer review sessions to share best practice.
- Include best-practice guidance around consultation.



Changing behaviours to enable more active travel

Workshop Lead:

- **Andrea Wright**
Tameside Council
- **Ellen Holmes**
Cycling UK
- **Lynnette Evans**
Cycling UK
- **Tom Houghton**
Tameside Council

The first step to increasing active travel is to identify the barriers that stop people from participating. Hosted by Cycling UK and Tameside Council, this workshop focussed on the COM-B model of behaviour change theory. This considers that Capability, Opportunity and Motivation are all essential to effect Behaviour change.

In the context of active travel:

- Capability refers to whether an individual has the psychological and physical capability to participate in active travel, including the required knowledge and skills.
- Opportunity refers to whether the physical and social environment makes active travel possible.

- Motivation refers to the desire, including conscious decision-making and habitual processes.

During the workshop participants discussed and assigned barrier statements to sections of a COM-B chart. A more detailed discussion was then facilitated to consider a potential project or campaign to tackle a component of the model required to effect behaviour change.



Changing behaviours to enable more active travel continued

A summary of key points:

- **Cycle Parking:** Discussion around the importance of cycle parking and the complexity of public and private provision and the different requirements for long and short stay provision.
- **Learn to Ride:** Educational and practical sessions to support beginners in accessible locations.
- **Campus/College Focussed Campaign:** To target a key demographic forming travel habits early:
 - » Promotion: Incentive for involvement from a specific college. Achieve greater awareness of active travel opportunities prior to a new student body intake.
 - » Induction Opportunities: Access to information and awareness of facilities. Getting to know your area.
 - » Community Involvement: Opportunities to engage in a new community, volunteering.
 - » Incentives Schemes: Leader boards and rewards schemes.
 - » Maintenance and Repair: Facilities local to a campus or student body, advertised on campus.
- **Bike Maintenance Stations:** Availability and access to maintenance/repair equipment.
- **Social Prescribing Opportunities:** Joined up approach to social prescribing to improve the active travel offer to support the health and wellbeing of local residents.
- **School Bikeability Wrap Around:** Consider broadening the offer linked to the existing Bikeability initiative, providing greater awareness of routes to school, local activities and active travel opportunities. Difficulty of reaching secondary school age, mainly availability of classroom time was also discussed.
- **Doctor Bike maintenance training:** Offer of free equipment, for instance helmets and reflectors.
- **Share with Care:** Signage to promote considerate shared use – for example, “Be Nice, Say Hi”.
- **Use of Council Land:** Opportunities to make better use of assets for active travel connectivity, training and events.
- **Enforcement:** Impact of antisocial behaviour on accessibility of public spaces.
- **Promotion:** Importance of promotion and engagement upon completion to improve awareness.



Event reflections

At the end of the event participants were asked:

What's the key take away from today?

- Decision-makers need to understand needs of all road-users
- Communication is key to changing attitudes
- Relationships between Elected Members and their communities is hugely important
- Businesses can play a key role by facilitating and encouraging active travel among their employees
- We need to remove barriers to make active travel the best option

“It was good to see what people were achieving in the community and to see how enthusiastic they were.”

Event attendee

What's one thing you will do following today's BAC?

- Share resources in the local community and keep promoting active travel
- Connect with active travel network and the wider business community
- Keep up to date with current plans
- Talk to employers
- Be more active and pro-active



Walking, wheeling or cycling – what’s stopping Greater Manchester?

Participants were also asked questions reflective of those asked at the start of the event. In comparison to their original responses, participants said:



Please use one word to describe
how you are feeling after today's BAC

WEARY GOOD NEWS
ENCOURAGED
POSITIVE RELIEVED
FRUSTRATED OVERWHELMED
RELIEVED MOTIVATED
INFORMED ENERGISED
REFLECTIVE
OPTIMISTIC
HOPEFUL
REALISTIC
FOCUSED

Participant feedback

Attendees were invited to complete a survey following the event, which aimed to understand what respondents thought worked well at the event as well as aspects that could be improved when delivering future BAC events.

A great opportunity to network and showcase the excellent work in Active Travel being undertaken.

Cllr Jan Jackson
Tameside Council

What did you enjoy about this BAC?

- Networking opportunities with a broad range of attendees.
- Hearing from guest speakers, especially community voices during the shining a spotlight session.
- The varied workshops available on the day.

Diverse audience, open and constructive discussion.

Event attendee

If we were to enhance the event in any way, what would your suggestions be for what we can do differently (at future BACs)?

- Let's invite more challenge and debate at the next BAC and discuss what's not working for Active Travel in GM.
- Go bigger – bigger venue for more attendees.
- Include a focused update on infrastructure.

I really enjoyed the day and the great engagement in the room.

Vernon Everitt
Transport Commissioner

Topics you would like to see discussed at a future event?

- Walking and wheeling.
- Successful infrastructure and active travel projects.
- Hearing from more community voices.
- GM's vision for active travel.

It was good to see what people were achieving in the community and to see how enthusiastic they were.

Event attendee

Media engagement

The Big Active Conversation event received media coverage from 11 media outlets, including BBC Radio Manchester, Manchester Evening News (MEN), Greatest Hit Radio, Safer Highways, Highways News, Hits Radio Manchester, About Manchester, Tameside Reporter, The Bolton News and Building Design & Construction.

Following the event, posts on social media achieved the following impressions and interactions:



Twitter

7.7k

Impressions²

19

Engagements³



Instagram

822

Video views on
Instagram reels

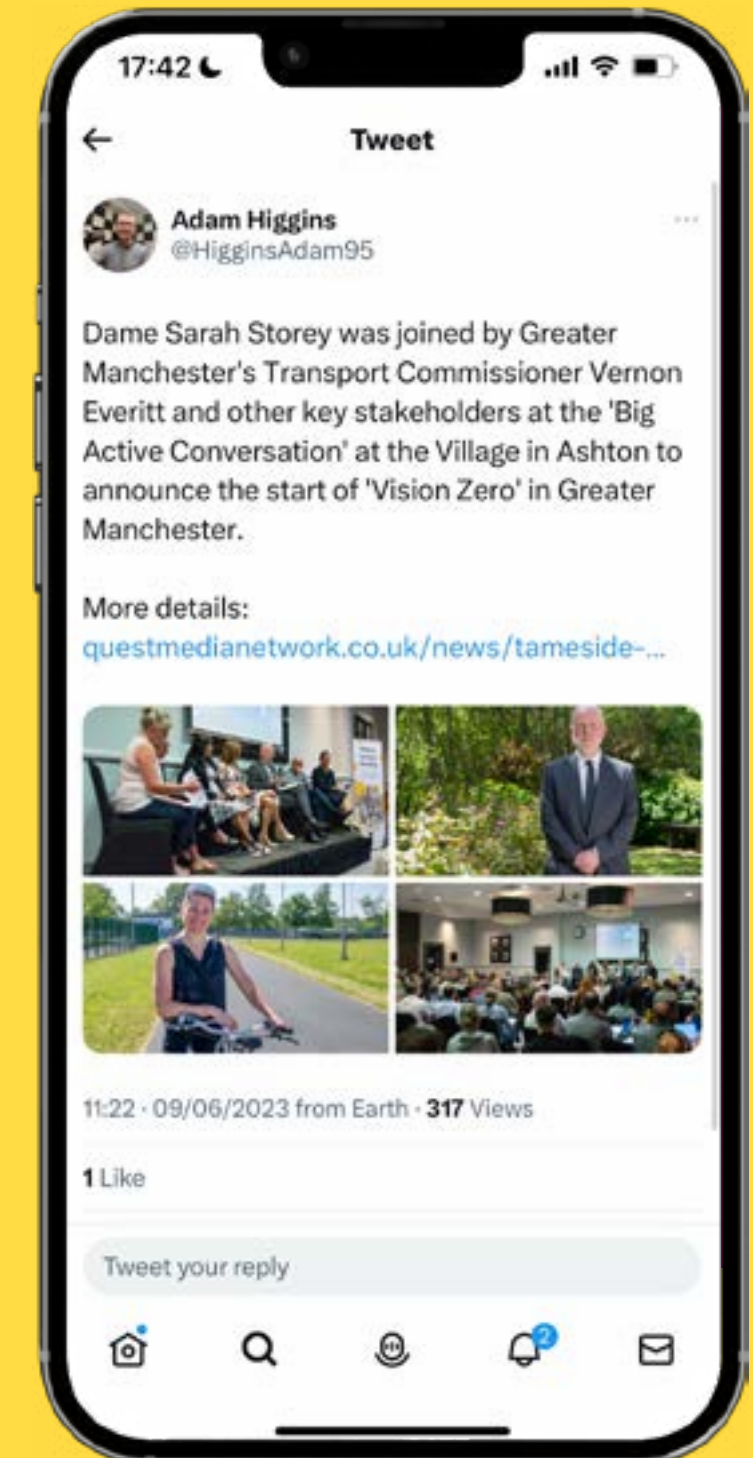
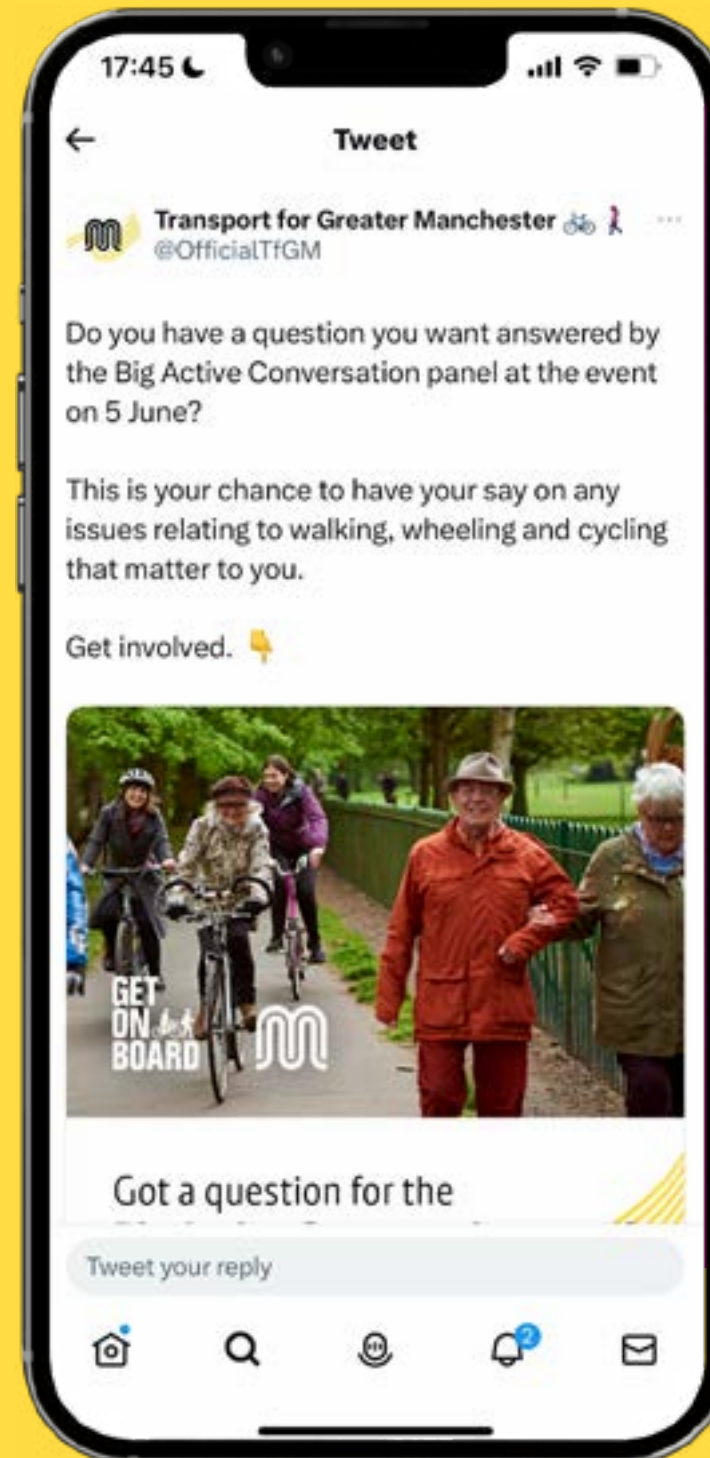
418

Impressions on
Instagram stories

² **Impressions:** The number of impressions is the number of times a post has been seen on screen. For example, if a post has achieved 18k impressions, that means it has been seen on screen 18k times.

³ **Engagements:** The number of engagements a post has received is how many times it has been liked, commented on, or shared on a social media platform.

Media engagement



Thank you