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For immediate release

“USE CLEAN AIR ZONES TO FUND SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL” SAYS CYCLING BODY

Cycling UK calls for the Government’s Clean Air Zones to pay for the promotion and development of sustainable and active travel

Cycling UK, in its response to the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) consultation on the “Implementation of Clean Air Zones in England”, has called on Government to ensure that Clean Air Zone (CAZ) charging is used only for investment in cycling and other forms of healthy and sustainable transport.

The Defra consultation, which closed on 09 December, sought views on current draft regulation requiring Clean Air Zones to be made in Birmingham, Derby, Leeds, Nottingham and Southampton. The consultation also looked into considerations on the costs and benefits of making Clean Air Zones.

Cycling UK’s response highlighted the value of investing in high quality cycling and walking conditions as an extremely effective way to tackle pollution, as well as reducing congestion, greenhouse gas emissions and noise. The national cycling charity also pointed out that CAZs could become safer and more liveable environments, and improve access for people unable to drive, including children, many older people, people with disabilities and those from lower income groups.

Cycling UK also said CAZs must have compulsory “cycle proofing”. This is where opportunities to create good or improve cycling conditions are designed at the outset when planning new highway and traffic schemes, new developments and indeed planned highway maintenance works.

Roger Geffen MBE, Cycling UK’s Policy Director, said:

“In this post-truth world, some journalists and politicians have claimed that cycle lanes actually worsen congestion and pollution. They can in fact take large numbers of polluting vehicles off the road, with a typical road lane carrying an average of 2,000 cars per hour or 14,000 bicycles.

“Let’s therefore use the revenue brought in from Clean Air Zones to fund sustainable travel, like cycling and walking. Our air will become more breathable and our cities more liveable. We don’t need to wait for new techno-fixes to clear up our air, the 200-year-old bicycle can do it right now.”

Cycling UK also pointed out CAZs should be used for the promotion of e-bike hire and cargo schemes, and also used as an opportunity for local authorities to adopt safe lorry designs with lower emissions.

Looking forward, Cycling UK will be urging supporters who live, work in or visit London to respond to the London Mayor’s consultation on tackling the capital’s air pollution, and will respond to the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) consultation: “Air pollution - outdoor air quality and health.”

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For more information contact the national Cycling UK Press Office on 01483 238 315, 07786 320 713 or email publicity@cyclinguk.org

Notes to editors:

1. Cycling UK, the national cycling charity, inspires and helps people to cycle and keep cycling, whatever kind of cycling they do or would like to do. Over a century's experience tells us that cycling is more than useful transport; it makes you feel good, gives you a sense of freedom and creates a better environment for everyone.
www.cyclinguk.org
2. Cycling UK's full response is available to download at: **XXXXX**
3. For further information on the Government's consultation go to:
<https://consult.defra.gov.uk/airquality/implementation-of-cazs/>
4. The Healthy Air Campaign's "take action" tool for responding to the Mayor's consultation is at <https://get.healthyair.org.uk/>
5. The NICE consultation is at
<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/indevelopment/gid-phg92/consultation/html-content>