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# CYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS SIGNAGE STUDY

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*UNITED – KINGDOM*

*CYCLISTS*

Transport,  
Health and  
Environment  
Pan-European  
Programme  
(THE PEP)

September 2012



## National context

United Kingdom does not have a specific "cycle policy", but in the context of the January 2011 White Paper dedicated to "creating growth and reducing carbon emissions", the government clearly states its support for the development of "active and sustainable" transport.

This commitment to helping local authorities, the best able to change practices, has led to the creation of a fund of £560 million (€700 million) to support the development of sustainable local transport. This fund is intended to support local authorities by encouraging the development of low-carbon transport in their area.

Public transport, walking and cycling are especially concerned.

This programme is based on an assessment of the health benefits of active modes performed in several towns that have developed a policy of encouraging walking and cycling. ("Creating growth, cutting carbon. Making sustainable local transport happen" - Dept. of Transport – January 2011).

The **British government** works closely with people from the cycling world through a ministerial forum to encourage cycling.

The UK Department of Transport has a department dedicated to sustainable transport, including active transport. Consideration of pedestrians comes under different fields within the Department of Transport: road safety, signage, infrastructure projects, etc. Finally, there are tax breaks for purchasing bicycles for commuting to work.

**At local level**, structures and organizations are varied; the cycle field, being a transverse one, is usually dealt with by different departments. It is generally local authorities that provide funding for cycle routes.

It should be noted that the UK has very active non-governmental organizations that can fund the cycle network, for the most part through grants from various sources.

Users' **associations** allow public services to have feedback on the work carried out and make proposals about the policy defined. The main British association working to promote cycling is **Sustrans** [www.sustrans.org.uk]. The field of action of this charity association is sustainable transport. It works actively to enable people to walk, cycle or use public transport. It is developing the "National Cycle Network" of Great Britain which, in 2012 has approximately 25,000 kilometres used for 208 million bicycle trips (1.5 million users) in



2009. This network consists of marked routes, long distance trails, off-road tourist paths, quiet roads and cycle paths. Sustrans publishes a many factsheets, which one is devoted to direction signing on cycle routes (Direction signing on the national cycle network - 2006) and a guide dedicated to bikeways, from study stage to implementation (guidelines and practical details – 1997).

## **Regulations and signage at national level**

In United Kingdom, rules, regulations and signage are defined by the state and they are binding on all local authorities, which must respect them.

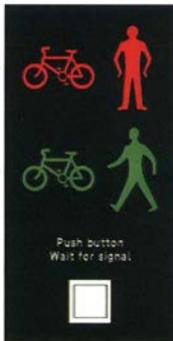
The reference document which is binding on all is: "Traffic Signs, Regulations and General Directions (TSRGD – 2002)" which defines all signs and marking, whether for policing or for giving directions.

### Some regulations specific to the United Kingdom:

- The bicycle is a vehicle. It is not in the same category as powered two-wheelers,
- cyclists can take one-way streets in the wrong direction when signage so authorizes,
- they are not allowed to go through red lights where there is right-turn lane,
- they can ride in pedestrian areas where signage so authorizes,
- they can use most bus lanes (with very few exceptions)
- they are not allowed to ride on the pavement unless signage indicates otherwise.

### Policing signage for cycles

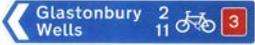
As vehicles, cycles are subject to all road signs, but some signs and markings are specific to cycles as shown in the table below (not exhaustive).

	Quiet lane
	Home zone
	Cycle lane
	Bus + cycle lane
	Cyclists crossing
	No cycling
	Crossing for pedestrians and cyclists managed by lights with push button
	Small "except cyclists" sign
	Cyclists dismount
	Cycle parking

	Start of a lane reserved for buses and cyclists
	Advance warning for a bus + taxi + cycle lane
	Advance warning for a cycle lane
	Cycle lane running against the traffic flow
	Bus + contraflow cycle lane
	Pedestrians and cyclists moving in separate spaces
	Cycle facility at intersection
	Signal informing warning pedestrians of cyclists arriving
	End of cycling facility
	Facility recommended for cyclists

## Direction signing

As with policing signage, direction signing is defined by the state, and it is usually used as a result of local initiative and must comply with national regulations. It is based on a network hierarchy, each route being characterized by a number. The background is theoretically blue with a number on a red background for national routes and a number on a blue background for regional routes (from 1 to 99 for each of the 10 geographical areas). Local routes are not numbered. All these routes make up the national cycling network.

	Road to be followed to reach the national network		Road signs giving advanced warning of a cycle road
	Turn left to follow the national route		
	National route continues at the next junction		
	Signage for the national network		Regional cycle network
	Tourist Destination		Example of a cycle facility at an intersection
	Direction / distance sign placed on a national and regional route		Indication of two different routes at the next junction
	Recommended route		Signage for cycle parking
	Turn right to follow the national route		
	Police signs characterizing the national route followed		

A distinction is made between advanced warning signage and position signage.



With the permission of the Department for Transport, it is possible to replace signs that are impossible to install by equivalent ground markings.

**Pedestrian directions for tourist purposes** are on a brown background. Tourist information (such as a viewpoint, for example), on a brown background, can be added to the signs.



**Service signage** can be included in the direction signage for cyclists using terms such as: town hall, library, museum, etc. to guide users to public facilities, if necessary.

Maintenance of this signage can be performed by local authorities; they often call on Sustrans, which has specialized monitoring units: these record missing information or damage to signage, and after informing the local authorities, they may be asked to set up temporary signage.

#### Reference documents

- Traffic Signs Manual (DfT – 1982)
- Cycle Infrastructure Design (DfT – 2008)
- TSRGD: Traffic Signs, Regulations and General Directions – 2002
- Know your Traffic Signs (DfT – 2010)
- Traffic Signs Policy Paper – Signing the way (DfT – 2011)
- Sustrans: technical factsheet “Direction Signing on a National Cycle Network” – 2006
- Sustrans: technical guide “Guidelines and practical details” – 1997

## **Regulations, signs and signage at local level**

Regions and towns define their own policy for cycle routes, and this is their responsibility. Signs used must comply with national regulations. Rules and regulations are the responsibility of the state which defines the official signs and markings. Some of them have developed their own technical and methodological guides.

#### Local technical and methodological guides (not exhaustive):

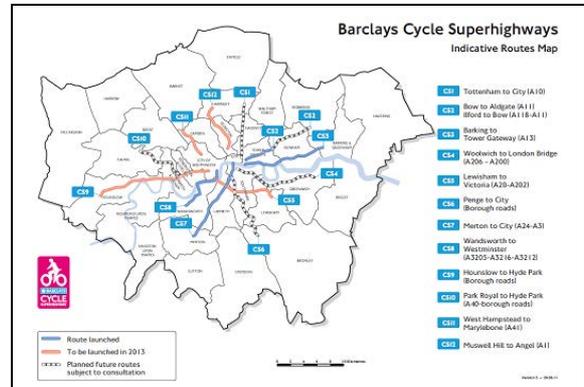
- London cycling design standards (Transport for London)
- Cycling design guide (Nottinghamshire County Council – 2006)
- Cycle friendly design guide (Edinburgh– 2000)
- Direction signing (Cornwall County Council – 2005)
- Cycling Infrastructure: Design Guidance and Best Practice (Scotland)

## A local initiative: London Cycle Superhighways

In 2010 the decision to create "cycle superhighways" was taken as part of the municipal transport project to improve cycle links between central London and the outlying areas (for commuting to work) and increase cycling by 400%.

This project consists of 12 radial routes. Two of them (CS3 - 12.3 km and CS7 - 13.7 km) were created in 2010 on an experimental basis, the programme is to continue during the period 2013 - 2015, after the Olympic Games.

The main component of this project is, of course, the infrastructure, but it should be noted that a number of additional measures have also been implemented, such as:



of

- increasing available parking,
- mirrors at intersections to improve visibility by reducing blind spots,
- incentives for employers to make cycling easier,
- training in the use of bicycles,
- large-scale communication on facilities and how they work,
- etc.

The routes need to be direct, comfortable, fast, continuous, even at intersections, legible, identifiable and safe:

- good quality surface,
- advanced lines of traffic lights at intersections,
- minimum width of 1.50 m,
- etc.

Particular attention has been focused on **signage** and the "find ability" of these routes:

- all routes are painted blue, which helps cyclists who use them to identify them immediately and without hesitation, as it does for motorists whose attention is aroused when they have to cross these routes;
- road markings, consisting of regularly occurring pictograms of a bicycle, remind users what the route is intended for; to these icons are added reminders of the number of the route being followed;



- Direction signage for these routes is an exception with regard to national regulations: the name of the cycle superhighway appears on the signs on a pink background, and destinations are given together with a travel time, and not a distance, the official texts requiring a distance to be specified. This deliberate choice aims to raise road-user awareness of the speed of cycling compared to other modes of transport.



Photo T.f.L.

Initial assessments, which have focused mainly on users, changes in uses and perceptions of the facilities by their users, show an increase in cycling, and lower and more regular travel times. At peak times, the CS7 carries around 500 cyclists.

Two other radial routes (CS2 - 4.3 km and CS8 - 8.2 km) were completed in 2011, taking into account the experience gained from the first two experimental facilities.