

Cycling in Parks: London Friends of Green Spaces Network

Parks are often used as safe places to cycle for leisure and many people who cycle as a means of transport cycle through parks because they are pleasant, quiet and free from traffic danger. Cycling in parks is, we believe, to be supported for its health and environmental benefits.

The majority of cyclists abide by rules and are considerate when sharing space with pedestrians in parks. However, sometimes park friends groups and cyclists or cycling groups come into conflict because some cyclists ride fast when sharing space with pedestrians, creating danger.

We would like to talk to cycling groups about coming together to create a shared 'protocol' for cycling in parks, which we can all agree to, which supports the use of parks for cycling where there is enough space and encourages cyclists to slow down, use a bell, use lights when dark, thank pedestrians who move aside and consider using an alternative route if they are in a hurry.

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Sharing Space in London's Parks and Open spaces

London's parks are much busier and, since the onset of the pandemic, people are cycling much more too. Both of these are great news and we hope they continue. Cycling and walking can happily coexist in parks but we need to make sure everyone stays safe.

1. Sometimes you might need to consider an alternative route

In some parks, the narrowness of paths or the numbers of users mean it's not possible to cycle without creating danger. If you are in a hurry, or the park has particularly narrow paths or is very busy with pedestrians, please consider using an alternative route for your journey.

2. Share the space

Paths in parks and open spaces are popular places to be enjoyed by everyone. Pedestrians have priority on paths unless it's a dedicated cycleway. Be mindful of others. Where space can be shared it must be done respectfully, considerately, and responsibly. Thank pedestrians who stand aside.

3. Drop your pace

Cyclists need to be ready to slow down to avoid someone being hurt. Enjoy the slow ride and appreciate the park. Consider your speed so you don't accidentally startle people, particularly young children, those who are frail, have reduced sight, hearing or mobility, or who are wearing headphones.

4. Stay aware

Expect the unexpected and be ready for it. Be friendly and give plenty of warning when passing. Ring a bell well in advance if approaching someone from behind but remember a bell might not be enough to alert people. Make eye contact so you can start to decide in advance the best way to pass each other.

5. Use lights

When it's dark, or in dull conditions, make sure you are visible to others. Use lights at night.