**Model Letter to your Council**

To: Local Councillors

Subject: **Enhancing Active Travel measures in the Local Authority area.**

Dear Councillor,

I am writing to you on behalf of [add your group name] to urge you to take strong and swift action to enhance Active Travel measures in the Local Authority area.

This is something which the government is requiring Highways Authorities in England to do (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reallocating-road-space-in-response-to-covid-19-statutory-guidance-for-local-authorities/traffic-management-act-2004-network-management-in-response-to-covid-19>) in response to the dreadful Covid-19 situation, with funding available.

The government is calling for a “step-change” in the roll-out of Active Travel measures, and that these should be taken “as swiftly as possible, and in any event within weeks”.

And there is so much potential – as the UK government says “according to the National Travel Survey in 2017-18 over 40% of urban journeys were under 2 miles – perfectly suited to walking and cycling”.

Such measures are crucial – as with reduced capacity on public transport due to the need for distancing measures, there is a real danger that traffic levels could quickly return to previous levels, or worse. And yet people have really appreciated recently less traffic leading better air quality and improved conditions for cycling and walking.

But this needs to be built on and locked in as we start to come out of lockdown, and in a way in which safety for pedestrians and cyclists is paramount and fully considered in how measures are planned.

We urge you to fast-track schemes such as these which are among those the government lists:

* Installing ‘pop-up’ cycle facilities
* Using cones and barriers
* Encouraging walking and cycling to school
* Reducing speed limits
* Introducing pedestrian and cycle zones

We also urge you to make these changes permanent – as there is an ongoing need to cut traffic levels from pre-Covid levels, both for air pollution reasons (including as those worst affected by heavy air pollution are sadly those more likely to now suffer the worst health consequences of Covid), and to meet the UK’s net zero climate commitments.

Road transport is the key problem for illegal air pollution, as well as the transport sector being the biggest for climate emissions. We urge you to ensure that infrastructure investment is prioritised for schemes which will enable us to build back better, rather than for those which would take us in the wrong direction such as road building.

Segregated cycleways and e-bikes are key factors in the future of urban travel, as Friends of the Earth’s Transport for Quality of Life policy paper makes clear (<https://policy.friendsoftheearth.uk/insight/segregated-cycleways-and-e-bikes-future-urban-travel>), as Active Travel needs to be the new normal for as many people as possible in the future, to help us have a transport system which promotes clean and healthy places to live or work or study in, or visit.

Kind regards,

[Your name and contact details]