

## **Response from Gio Spinella, Camden Conservatives**

Please find our responses to the questions you have raised:

*1. Vastly improve conditions for walking and cycling throughout the borough so that people will choose to change the way they travel.*

- *One third of all car trips in Camden to be replaced by a walking or a cycling trip by 2022 and half by 2026.*

This is a perfectly legitimate aspiration and objective. The only qualifier we would suggest is that there are categories of people, such as those for whom car transport is the only genuinely practical way of movement (due to age, disability or location) and those for whom the car is necessary for work, including builders, plumbers, electricians, people whose job requires large tools and heavy equipment. But with this qualifier in place, this is a goal to which the Camden Conservatives can agree.

*2. Adopt a policy that will result within 8 years in a borough-wide cycling network that is safe, comfortable and accessible to all.*

- *So that at least 50% of people who would like to cycle in Camden will take it up, wherever they live and whatever their age or ability.*
- *The network will be suitable for 12 year olds to use for independent travel.*

This is a good objective. We would stress that the network be designed so as to not contribute to congestion, which adds to air pollution.

One of the biggest impediments to cycling is affordability. We are therefore hopeful that the Mayor of London will agree to extend the Boris bike program into north London and call for it in our manifesto.

We are aware that bicycle theft is one of the most common thefts in the city and can cause great hardship to aspiring cyclists, often still having to pay for one bike before they can get another. In addition to urging all bicycle owners to insure their bikes privately, the Camden Conservative manifesto calls for Camden Council to explore the possibility of underwriting a borough-wide insurance scheme for all bike owners.

And safeguarding minors must be key to any network designed for their use. This may raise questions as to how this can be achieved both in terms of practicality and affordability.

*3. Develop and submit at least one Liveable Neighbourhood bid for an area in Camden that has high potential for walking and cycling. Each Liveable Neighbourhood will:*

- *incorporate practical steps that enable people to choose walking and cycling over private cars for their everyday journeys in the area;*
- *improve the experience of walking and cycling by creating healthy streets that are more attractive to people on foot;*
- *Link in to the Central London Walking network;*
- *Reduce the number of car trips through the area.*

Camden Conservatives are supportive of a Liveable Neighbourhood bid. We maintain the earlier caveats about ensuring that no street works increase congestion and we are aware that reduction of car trips is not an option for everybody. But within those limits, we believe restoring streets to one of their functions as an agora- an open space for meeting and exchange- for the community is an important and laudable goal.