# London prepares for landmark car-free day on Oxford Street amid mixed reactions



London Mayor Sadiq Khan has announced a landmark car-free event on Oxford Street, set to take place on Sunday, September 21, from midday to 8pm. Dubbed "This is Oxford Street," the event aims to offer Londoners and visitors a glimpse of what the future could hold for the iconic shopping thoroughfare, showcasing it as a pedestrian-friendly, vibrant public space. The occasion will feature a wide array of attractions, including art installations, a children's literary festival, an 'urban forest,' sports pitches, live performances, and food and drink stalls. Major retailers such as Schuh, Holland & Barrett, Topshop, John Lewis, and The Body Shop are backing the initiative with interactive activities, while over 30 shops along Oxford Street will offer special deals and vouchers during the event. The NBA, Major League Baseball, and the charitable organisation Choose Love are also supporting the event. Mayor Khan described it as “a landmark, free event open for everyone” and an opportunity to “showcase the nation’s high street as you have never seen it before” (The Standard).

This car-free day is part of a broader vision to pedestrianise Oxford Street permanently, transforming it into a world-class, accessible hub that combines shopping, leisure, and outdoor events. The idea of pedestrianisation has been in development for over 20 years and recently gained majority support from Londoners and local businesses in a public consultation. Inspired by successful urban transformations such as Times Square in New York and La Rambla in Barcelona, the project seeks to rejuvenate the mile-long stretch of Oxford Street, which attracts approximately 500,000 visitors daily but has faced economic challenges, including store closures. The mayor envisions that pedestrianisation will spur tourism, attract investment, and create employment opportunities. To realise the plan, Khan intends to work with the government on necessary legislation and devise alternative routes for the numerous buses that currently run through Oxford Street (Reuters).

However, the plans have faced criticism from various quarters. Some residents’ groups have labelled the pedestrianisation as a ‘senseless vanity project’, questioning the necessity of such a radical overhaul and expressing frustration over insufficient details, particularly regarding bus rerouting. The London Assembly has launched an investigation to evaluate the potential impact on the local community. Westminster Council has raised concerns about increased safety risks, warning that removing traffic flow could make Oxford Street a target for terrorist attacks, especially hostile vehicle incidents, and has hinted at possible legal action to block the plan. Meanwhile, under the proposed pedestrianisation, cyclists would be banned from riding through the restricted section, a move supported by some cycling campaigners for safety reasons but criticised for the lack of protected alternative cycling routes (The Standard).

Mayor Khan has sought to address financial concerns by assuring that the project’s estimated £150 million cost will not fall on the shoulders of Londoners. He is confident in securing private sector funding to cover expenses, aiming to create a pedestrian-friendly space without impacting the public purse. Support from major retailers and high-profile organisations during the upcoming car-free event illustrates the significant commercial interest in Oxford Street’s transformation and the ambition to position it as a clean, inclusive, and world-renowned destination for all (The Standard).

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/oxford-street-car-free-day-plans-sadiq-khan-b1247325.html), [[2]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/oxford-street-car-free-day-plans-sadiq-khan-b1247325.html)
* Paragraph 2 – [[3]](https://www.reuters.com/business/retail-consumer/londons-oxford-street-go-traffic-free-shopping-area-makeover-says-mayor-2025-06-16/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[5]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/oxford-street-pedestrianisation-plans-backlash-b1223833.html), [[6]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/oxford-street-westminster-council-terror-target-pedestrianised-b1182954.html), [[4]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/oxford-street-pedestrianisation-cyclists-ban-london-mayor-sadiq-khan-b1182675.html)
* Paragraph 4 – [[7]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/ps150m-bill-pedestrianise-oxford-street-sadiq-khan-b1204104.html), [[2]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/oxford-street-car-free-day-plans-sadiq-khan-b1247325.html)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/oxford-street-car-free-day-plans-sadiq-khan-b1247325.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/oxford-street-car-free-day-plans-sadiq-khan-b1247325.html> - London Mayor Sadiq Khan has announced a car-free event on Oxford Street, scheduled for Sunday, September 21, from midday to 8pm. The event aims to showcase the potential of a pedestrianised Oxford Street, featuring art installations, a children's literary festival, an 'urban forest', sports pitches, live performances, and food and drink stalls. Major retailers, including Schuh, Holland & Barrett, Topshop, John Lewis, and The Body Shop, are supporting the event with interactive activities. The initiative is also backed by the NBA, Major League Baseball, and the charitable organisation Choose Love. Over 30 retailers on Oxford Street will offer special deals and vouchers during the event. Mayor Khan expressed his commitment to transforming Oxford Street into a world-class, accessible, and clean space for all.
3. <https://www.reuters.com/business/retail-consumer/londons-oxford-street-go-traffic-free-shopping-area-makeover-says-mayor-2025-06-16/> - London Mayor Sadiq Khan has announced plans to pedestrianise Oxford Street, aiming to revitalise the area and create a world-class, accessible hub for shopping, leisure, and outdoor events. The proposal, which has been in development for over two decades, received majority support from Londoners and businesses during a recent public consultation. Inspired by successful transformations like Times Square in New York and La Rambla in Barcelona, the initiative seeks to rejuvenate the mile-long stretch of Oxford Street. Despite attracting around 500,000 visitors daily, the area has faced challenges, including the closure of major retail stores and economic decline. The pedestrianisation plan is expected to improve tourism, attract investment, and generate employment. To implement the project, Khan plans to collaborate with the government to pass the necessary legislation and identify alternative routes for the numerous buses currently using the street. ([reuters.com](https://www.reuters.com/business/retail-consumer/londons-oxford-street-go-traffic-free-shopping-area-makeover-says-mayor-2025-06-16/?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/oxford-street-pedestrianisation-cyclists-ban-london-mayor-sadiq-khan-b1182675.html> - Under Sadiq Khan's plans to pedestrianise Oxford Street, cyclists will be prohibited from riding through the designated traffic-free section. The initiative aims to remove buses, cars, taxis, and delivery vehicles, prioritising pedestrians. Cyclists are advised to use alternative routes and lock their bikes at designated locations. The decision has received support from cycling campaigners, who believe the transformation will make central London safer and more pleasant. However, concerns have been raised about the lack of protected alternative routes for cyclists. ([standard.co.uk](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/oxford-street-pedestrianisation-cyclists-ban-london-mayor-sadiq-khan-b1182675.html?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/oxford-street-pedestrianisation-plans-backlash-b1223833.html> - Plans to pedestrianise Oxford Street have faced criticism from residents' groups, who describe the initiative as a 'senseless vanity project'. They argue that the need for such a radical overhaul has been overstated and express concerns about the lack of information regarding the pedestrianisation plans, particularly how buses would be rerouted. The London Assembly is investigating the proposal to assess its potential impact on the community. ([standard.co.uk](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/mayor-sadiq-khan-oxford-street-pedestrianisation-plans-backlash-b1223833.html?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/oxford-street-westminster-council-terror-target-pedestrianised-b1182954.html> - Westminster Council has warned that pedestrianising Oxford Street could increase the risk of terrorist attacks, potentially making it a target for hostile vehicle incidents. The council has expressed concerns about the safety implications of removing traffic from the area and has indicated the possibility of legal action to block the pedestrianisation plans. ([standard.co.uk](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/oxford-street-westminster-council-terror-target-pedestrianised-b1182954.html?utm_source=openai))
7. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/ps150m-bill-pedestrianise-oxford-street-sadiq-khan-b1204104.html> - Mayor Sadiq Khan has assured that Londoners will not bear the financial burden of pedestrianising Oxford Street. He expressed confidence in securing funding from private sector investments to cover the costs of the project, aiming to transform the area into a pedestrian-friendly space without impacting the public budget. ([standard.co.uk](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/ps150m-bill-pedestrianise-oxford-street-sadiq-khan-b1204104.html?utm_source=openai))