# Newham surges into top ten London boroughs for walking and cycling improvements



An east London borough, Newham, has been singled out as the most improved area in the capital for encouraging walking and cycling, according to the latest Healthy Streets Scorecard. Once ranked 13th among London's 33 boroughs, Newham has climbed to eighth place, reflecting significant progress in creating a more pedestrian and cyclist-friendly environment. This rise coincides with Newham’s reputation as the former Olympic borough and its current status as the home of London’s City Hall.

Topping the Healthy Streets rankings is the City of London, which displaced Islington from its previous leading position. The City’s success is credited to its comprehensive cycle infrastructure, including having the highest cycle track density per kilometre of road in London. Key initiatives like weekday vehicle restrictions at Bank junction and ongoing transformative projects such as the St Paul’s gyratory redevelopment have enhanced pedestrian and cyclist safety. Islington, known for reducing residential speed limits to 20mph, installing seven low traffic neighbourhoods (LTNs), and implementing 35 school streets that restrict through-traffic during school hours, secured second place. Not far behind in third and fourth places were Hackney and Camden respectively, boroughs also recognised for substantial investments in active travel measures.

Hackney, notable for having over half its streets covered by LTNs and running 50 school streets, was commended by the Healthy Streets Coalition for improving air quality, encouraging active lifestyles, and cutting carbon emissions. Despite having fewer cycle tracks compared to the City of London and some neighbouring boroughs, Hackney’s achievements in promoting sustainable travel are significant. The borough was previously named London’s top area for encouraging walking and cycling to combat climate change, according to a London Cycling Campaign report. Additional survey data from the London Travel Demand Survey indicate that Hackney boasts more sustainable transport journeys than any other London borough, underscoring its leading role in public transport, walking, and cycling uptake.

Other boroughs within Inner London, like Southwark, have made notable strides, advancing beyond Westminster to secure a top-five position for healthy streets. Outer London’s standout performer is Waltham Forest, acclaimed for its award-winning LTNs and cycle routes, which have helped it outscore some Inner London boroughs.

At the less successful end of the scale, Bexley remains the poorest-performing borough in terms of promoting active travel, with persistent car dependency hindering progress. Similarly, Hillingdon and Havering, along with the Inner London boroughs of Kensington & Chelsea and Lewisham, scored poorly due to car-dominated environments that deter walking, cycling, and the use of public transport. Tower Hamlets has also faced criticism for policies viewed as counterproductive to active travel. Despite low levels of car ownership, its borough mayor’s removal of a school street scheme and consultations on axing LTNs have contributed to the area being ranked among the worst for fostering healthy streets.

These rankings reflect growing awareness and policy shifts aimed at creating healthier, more sustainable urban environments across London. While the City of London, Islington, Hackney, and Camden lead the way, continued efforts are necessary across other boroughs to reduce car dependency and expand infrastructure supporting walking and cycling, critical components for tackling climate change and enhancing public health.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[2]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/transport/best-london-boroughs-walking-cycling-newham-city-of-london-healthy-streets-b1236780.html)
* Paragraph 2 – [[2]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/transport/best-london-boroughs-walking-cycling-newham-city-of-london-healthy-streets-b1236780.html), [[4]](https://lcc.org.uk/news/healthy-streets-scorecard-2023-names-best-and-worst-boroughs/), [[6]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/islington-hackney-boroughs-top-healthy-streets-table-havering-bexley-hillingdon-b1093322.html)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/transport/best-london-boroughs-walking-cycling-newham-city-of-london-healthy-streets-b1236780.html), [[5]](https://news.hackney.gov.uk/hackney-streets-getting-healthier/), [[3]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/cycling-walking-best-boroughs-report-london-cycling-campaign-b1082039.html), [[7]](https://news.hackney.gov.uk/hackney-achieves-sustainable-transport-best/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[4]](https://lcc.org.uk/news/healthy-streets-scorecard-2023-names-best-and-worst-boroughs/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[2]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/transport/best-london-boroughs-walking-cycling-newham-city-of-london-healthy-streets-b1236780.html), [[4]](https://lcc.org.uk/news/healthy-streets-scorecard-2023-names-best-and-worst-boroughs/), [[3]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/cycling-walking-best-boroughs-report-london-cycling-campaign-b1082039.html)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/transport/best-london-boroughs-walking-cycling-newham-city-of-london-healthy-streets-b1236780.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/transport/best-london-boroughs-walking-cycling-newham-city-of-london-healthy-streets-b1236780.html> - An east London borough where there has been a dramatic increase in the number of 20mph streets has been named the most improved area in the capital for encouraging people to walk and cycle. Newham, the former Olympic borough that is now home to London’s City Hall, rose from 13th to eighth place in the 'Healthy Streets Scorecard' of all 33 boroughs. The City of London took top place, replacing Islington, which came second. Hackney was third and Camden was fourth. Bexley, where 'car dependency is entrenched', remained the worst borough in London in terms of encouraging 'active travel'.
3. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/cycling-walking-best-boroughs-report-london-cycling-campaign-b1082039.html> - Hackney was on Thursday named as London’s top borough for encouraging walking and cycling to tackle climate change — while Tower Hamlets was shamed for promoting driving, despite low levels of car ownership. A report by the London Cycling Campaign analysed progress on measures such as protected cycle lanes and safer junctions that are key to encouraging Londoners to switch from car journeys. Hackney claimed first place for building 'climate safe streets', with Camden, Waltham Forest and Lambeth close behind, both in terms of schemes and the 'modal shift' away from car travel. But Tower Hamlets, where borough mayor Lutfur Rahman has removed a 'school street' scheme and has consulted on axing low traffic neighbourhoods, was ranked as the worst in the capital.
4. <https://lcc.org.uk/news/healthy-streets-scorecard-2023-names-best-and-worst-boroughs/> - In the Healthy Streets Scorecard for 2023, the City of London, Islington, Hackney and Camden topped the rankings, with Southwark moving past Westminster to gain a Top 5 slot. Well known for its LTNs and cycle routes, award-winning Waltham Forest leads the way in Outer London, scoring higher than some Inner London Boroughs. The worst-performing boroughs were Hillingdon, Bexley and Havering, with car-dominated environments failing to enable residents to switch to public transport, walking and cycling. The worst-performing Inner London boroughs are Kensington & Chelsea and Lewisham.
5. <https://news.hackney.gov.uk/hackney-streets-getting-healthier/> - Hackney was recognised by the Healthy Streets Coalition as one of the three London boroughs with the healthiest streets, after it looked at the work councils are doing to improve air quality, boost active lifestyles, encourage walking and cycling and cut carbon emissions. Hackney is now the first borough in London to have over half of streets covered by low traffic neighbourhoods, and a huge 50 schools with School Streets, supporting people to walk, shop and cycle locally.
6. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/islington-hackney-boroughs-top-healthy-streets-table-havering-bexley-hillingdon-b1093322.html> - The City of London, Islington and Hackney were on Monday named the best boroughs for 'healthy streets' – while Hillingdon, Bexley and Havering were the worst. Islington has converted all residential roads to 20mph and introduced seven low traffic neighbourhoods (LTNs) and 35 'school streets', where through traffic is restricted at the start and end of the school day. The City – covering the 'Square Mile' financial district – was praised for schemes such as Bank junction, which imposes weekday daytime restrictions on vehicles to improve pedestrian and cyclist safety, Aldgate Square and the forthcoming St Paul’s gyratory transformation. The City also had the most cycle track per kilometre of road.
7. <https://news.hackney.gov.uk/hackney-achieves-sustainable-transport-best/> - Hackney Council has further added to its success of being recognised as the 2009 London Transport Borough of the Year with more sustainable transport journeys than any other London borough, as revealed in the London Travel Demand Survey. Each year, a total of 8,000 households in London are randomly selected to take part in the London Travel Demand Survey, a study commissioned by Transport for London, to provide an insight into their travel behaviours in order to paint a complete picture of travel by people in London. Results this year indicate that Hackney remains a top performer in public transport, walking and cycling.