



WATCH & LEARN: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE: BIKING NETWORKS PARIS'S EXPANDING BIKE LANES (5:22 min) VIDEO Script & Vocabulary (page 1 of 2/v31848)

INTERMEDIATE (B1 - B2) AND ABOVE

- ◊ Read the script and note new vocabulary
- ◊ Write three sentences using new vocabulary
- ◊ Prepare for the discussion questions

Starting Off

We all know Amsterdam is a cycling city, but more and more cities across the globe are taking a leaf out of Amsterdam's book.

- 1 Read the **Video Script** below. The words in **bold** are defined in the **Vocabulary** section. Look up any new words in a dictionary.
- 2 Go to the **Your Turn** section at the end of this document. Practice using new words and expressions from the video script to prepare for your next class.
- 3 Look at the **Discussion Questions** and prepare your responses for the next class.

Video Script:

Narrator: How did Paris **transform** itself into a cycling city? Like many major cities across Europe, reducing pollution and **taking** as many cars **off** of the roads and streets has been an important priority of most local governments. Paris is no exception to this, but how did this happen in The City of Love and how much progression have they really made towards being a more **bike-friendly** city?



The Paris Cycling Revolution

Well let's look at the Paris cycling revolution. With the pandemic and rising prices of living, more people jumping on bikes as a main or regular mode of transport seems to have occurred globally. Many major cities such as the obvious candidates, Amsterdam and Copenhagen, have already been through a cycling revolution **as it were**. However, Paris was slightly **later to this party** in becoming a more cyclist-orientated destination. **Slowly but surely** more and more cycling-specific infrastructure has been added such as bike lanes and routes. This has largely been due to the mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo of the Socialist Party, wanting to take more cars off of Paris's busy roads.

In addition to the increased infrastructure, Paris also benefits from having their own version of London's famous **Boris Bikes**. These are called the Velib-Metropole and are a public bike sharing transportation service which is a solid alternative to driving and adding to the **fumes** and pollution in and around the city. So with Paris's increase in infrastructure for bike paths for cyclists, how many bike paths are there in Paris?

How many bike paths are there in Paris?

Currently there are around 700KM worth of cycle paths as well as routes around Paris. Although just an estimation, it's hard not to agree that this is still a really solid amount of space to be dedicated to cyclists and bikes. Since Anne Hidalgo was elected mayor of Paris in 2014, she is estimated to have had 299 kilometers worth of bicycle lanes installed around the city which in turn gave an increase of 35% of bike-friendly streets throughout Paris.

During the pandemic, Paris saw an increase in temporary bike lanes being **set up** around the city to help provide a safer riding environment for cyclists while there were less cars on the roads. Many of these happened to stay after the pandemic eased, which is great for those choosing to cycle.

Discussion Questions:

- ◊ Do you enjoy biking as a means of recreation and / or transportation?
- ◊ Is your city easy and safe to bike around?
- ◊ Are you supportive of major cities throughout the world improving their bike infrastructure at the expense of auto routes?

Vocabulary:

- **transform** - make a marked change in the form, nature, or appearance of
- **take off** - remove something from somewhere (often clothing from one or another's body, but not exclusively)
- **bike-friendly** - Bicycle-friendly policies and practices help some people feel more comfortable about traveling by bicycle with other traffic. The level of bicycle-friendliness of an environment can be influenced by many factors including town planning and quantity / connectedness of cycling routes.
- **as it were** - in a way (used to be less precise)
- **late to the party** - find out about something, or start becoming involved in something, later than most other people
- **slowly but surely** - achieving the desired results gradually and reliably rather than quickly and spectacularly
- **Boris Bikes** - London's free bike system
- **fumes** - an amount of gas or vapour that smells strongly or is dangerous to inhale
- **set up** - place or erect something in position

Vocabulary continued on next page...



Video Script continued on next page...



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Video Script continued...

Narrator: Moreover, these bike paths are also **brilliant** because they are multi-use. For example, the ever-growing, electric scooter community also benefit from having improved and increased use of bike paths throughout the city, once again, taking more cars off of Paris streets. But even though there's been a dramatic increase in bike lanes, does every street in Paris have bike lanes?

Does Every Street Have Bike Lanes?

Sadly no, not all streets have them as of yet. However, many streets are **gradually** being turned into more bike-friendly places in addition to more green spaces being created, but improving the infrastructure for cyclists will never be an **overnight fix** and it will unfortunately take a little more time. So what is the Paris cycling strategy?

What is the Paris Cycling Strategy?

Due to wanting less cars driving as well as parked on the streets of Paris to reduce pollution and promote greener modes of transport, Paris's mayor promised some plans to ensure the already impressive progression was continued upon. For example, within the next four years the city's government announced that it would be gaining around 180km worth of bike lanes. These bike lanes would also be permanent as well as protected to ensure a safe experience to encourage people to ride their bikes.

In addition to this, Paris has also decided to triple its popular secure bike parking spaces by adding up to 100,000 new spaces which also includes 1,000 for **cargo bikes**. This is to ensure cyclists feel their bikes are safe to leave and practical to use in and around the city. All of this sounds expensive doesn't it? So how much has Paris spent on cycling?

How much has Paris spent on cycling?

So far, with the improvement of cycle lanes and appropriate infrastructure, Paris has already spent €150 million which was implemented due to their first cycling focus plan to ensure more people rode their bikes. It was announced in 2021 by Mayor Anne Hidalgo that the local government was going to be investing a **staggering** €250 million into updating as well as improving the cycling infrastructure around Paris. Therefore, it's clear to see that the current government definitely wants to improve upon their already growing cycling network to help secure themselves a spot as one of the most bike-friendly cities in Europe. But all of this money and planning must be justified, so how many cyclists are there in Paris?

How many cyclists are there in Paris?

In Paris, according to the New York Times, around 1-million-people are riding their bikes within Paris on a daily basis, which is a pretty staggering figure if you consider how many cars take off from the roads of Paris not to mention the fumes and pollutants. Therefore, imagine how much this **figure** could grow with the added infrastructure and support which would be implemented thanks to the new bike plan from Paris's government. Could we see Paris as the new Copenhagen with Parisians **ditching** their cars for bikes? That could certainly be in Paris's future.

But what is cycling in Paris like now?

Paris is now a much more bike-friendly city to visit if two wheels is **your thing**. This is **thanks to** the improvement of existing bike lanes as well as the investment which has been made into improving cyclists experiences of riding around the city, therefore offering a much safer, as well as significantly more **carefree** and enjoyable, bike ride throughout Paris. You will also **subsequently** see a lot more fellow cyclists riding throughout the streets too, which is always great to see. However, as this implementation and building of sufficient infrastructure isn't unfortunately a quick fix, parts of the city is (are) still not too great for cycling, mainly big junctions. Therefore, as long as you keep **alert**, the overall riding experience has greatly improved.

Vocabulary continued...

- **brilliant** - excellent; marvelous
- **gradual** - taking place or progressing slowly or by degrees
- **overnight fix** - repaired or improved in a very rapid or immediate manner
- **cargo bikes** - a human powered vehicle designed and constructed specifically for transporting loads
- **staggering** - very large, shocking, or surprising
- **figure** - a number, especially one which forms part of official statistics or relates to the financial performance of a company
- **ditch** - get rid of or give up
- **your thing** - something you like or enjoy doing
- **thanks to** - as a result of; in consequence
- **carefree** - free from anxiety or responsibility
- **subsequently** - after a particular thing has happened; afterwards
- **alert** - vigilant

Your Turn! Using new vocabulary is the best way to learn and remember it.

- 1 Choose three words or expressions from the video that are new to you and write a sentence using each one in your notebook.
- 2 Try to use them in a context that is familiar to you to help you retain them.