



Why Use Cargobikes for Freight?

One third of road transport NOx emissions in London are from light good vehicles (LGV) and heavy goods vehicles (HGV), which includes deliveries and vehicles servicing office buildings¹.

To reduce air pollution, our advice is to **transition to using cargobikes or cycle couriers for freight where possible**. That is because cycle freight is a quiet, low cost, zero emission option for transporting goods. It's one of the simplest steps businesses can take to reduce pollution.

Contact us at cityairbusiness@cityoflondon.gov.uk if you would like free 1-1 advice on how your business could work towards cleaner air, and more information on cargo bikes.

Deliveries by Cycles – Business benefits

- **Improved journey time reliability**
 - Use cycle lanes to bypass traffic
 - Cycle couriers can generally get closer to the delivery location
 - Prior to COVID-19, central London journeys made by cycle can be 25-50% faster than those made by van². An example of journey time reduction can be found [here](#).
 - With post-Covid road space and layout changes, cycle couriers will continue to be faster than vans.
- **Reduced costs for business**
 - Cargobikes are cheaper than vans overall
 - Lower running costs - no congestion charge, no parking charges or fines
 - Comparable cost per delivery to van-based couriers
- **Improved air quality and lower carbon emissions**
 - Each LGV replaced by cargo bike:
 - saves 3kg NOx emissions
 - saves 21g particulate matter (PM)
 - equivalent health damage cost saving of £270/yr
 - Each HGV replaced by cargo bike:
 - saves 7kg NOx emissions
 - Saves 60g PM
 - equivalent health damage cost saving of £700/yr³
- **Positive public relations**
 - Helps achieve supply chain CSR commitments
- **Reduced congestion**
 - Cycles reduce the kerbside loading and unloading space

Types of Cargo Cycles

People are often surprised by just how much a cargo bike can carry. Figure 1 shows a variety of different cargo and e-cargo bikes that are in use, with the width, and load capabilities noted next to each bike.

¹ London Atmospheric Emissions Inventory (LAEI) 2013 update

² Cycle Freight Study, TfL, 2018.

³TfL Cycle Freight Study 2018, CRP Cycle Logistics Study 2019

	Payload	Width		Payload	Width
Messenger 	20–40kg 0.03–0.05m ³	50cm	Front-load cargo trike 	100–200kg 0.2–0.6m ³	80–90cm
Front-load cargo bike 	100–125kg 0.1–0.7m ³	50–90cm	Rear-load cargo trike 	200–300kg 0.5–1.5m ³	80–120cm
Rear-load cargo bike 	100kg 0.4–0.8m ³	50cm	Trailer 	60–150kg 0.2–2.1m ³	80–110cm

Figure 1: Types of cargo bikes, payload (kg/m³), width (cm). Cycle Freight Study, TfL, 2018



The current largest model of e-cargo bike is used by Pedal Me.

- Can carry the equivalent volume to a small van and up to 150kg.
- Bike + trailer rig can carry more volume than a standard transit, up to 300kg.
- They just need to be allowed into the loading bay.

Case Study

Sustrans, the sustainable transport NGO, with 53-person workforce undertook their office move from Farringdon to Tower Hamlets by cycle courier. They moved a 117kg printer, 110 storage boxes, 50 crates of IT equipment, three cupboards and two smoothie bikes, using e-cargo bikes rather than a big diesel van.

Where to find Cargobikes for Couriers

Cycle couriers that operate in the City of London include -

- Absolutely Couriers - <https://www.absolutelycourier.com/>
- CitySprint - <https://www.citysprint.co.uk/>
- PedalMe - <https://pedalme.co.uk/>
- Zedify - <https://www.zedify.co.uk/>

The Cross River Partnership also has a directory of zero emission and cycle courier companies on their website (<https://crossriverpartnership.org/directory/>).