



FIT FOR LIFE

Walk this way

Carol Westmorland has a plan to get the nation fitter - and it involves a new approach to shopping

I've been struck by a realisation so obvious I can't think why nobody has made this suggestion before.

Especially me. With no immediate end in sight to the nation's poor health and as, it seems, cycling into city centres not quite there yet, I am proposing the next best thing. The cost? Perhaps, in the early stages, a little wounded pride.

My plan combines two things: 1) being unpopular and 2) being popular. I believe it could be rolled out nationwide. For now, I am setting my sights more locally. I am expecting an enormous response.

Busy people do not always move fast. In fact, busy people often move slowly and that is why they believe they are busy. Inefficiency. The penny dropped and the obvious solution hit. I am proposing to target the hub of city life. The shops.

My manifesto is going to follow a two-pronged attack 1) to get the people fitter and 2) create less urgency when they get in their car.

Illuminated signs will begin to line walkways around the city centre periphery - one mile out - asking everyone to stick to a minimum speed of 4 mph. The signs will flash red to indicate a (person's) drop in speed with a polite accompanying audible message. Less polite if you become a repeat offender.

City parking limited to one hour - this to put you off using your car with unlimited car parking one mile out. With time management and increased walking speed any onward journey by car



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will be less frantic, leading to less inclination to speed.

The people of Carlisle will inadvertently get fitter with this increased cardiovascular activity. Shoppers will be alert with energy. Café society will thrive as fuel stops. All that initial huffing and puffing will require rest stops to begin with. The audible messages will soon become normal. Walkways will be followed in an orderly direction with spot fines should you be caught dawdling with intent (getting in the way).

People of Carlisle I am to become your saviour - just don't trip me up next time I'm passing.



Carol Westmorland lives in the Eden Valley. She is a Cycling Time Trials national champion, clocking up 445 miles in 24 hours. She also teaches pilates. www.pilates-cumbria.uk