Time to make the case and rise to the challenges

September 2015

Get Sutton Cycling

ABSTRACT

Time to make the case and rise to the challenges: a response to Sutton Councils' Draft Cycling Delivery Strategy 2015 from Get Sutton Cycling

LONDON CYCLING CAMPAIGN

#space4cycling   getsuttoncycling.org.uk | @cyclinginsutton

Get Sutton Cycling: the London Cycling Campaign in Sutton

Early in 2013, the All-Party Parliamentary Cycling Group conducted an Inquiry looking at the state of cycling in Britain. A report entitled *Get Britain Cycling*, outlining 18 recommendations, was published in April 2013.

For the whole of Britain to get cycling, Sutton has to get cycling too. And that is why, early in 2014, supporters of the London Cycling Campaign in Sutton, along with some residents wishing to make cycling feel safe for themselves and their families, launched Get Sutton Cycling. Given the success of *Love London, Go Dutch* in 2012 and with *Space for Cycling* imminent, it also seemed an appropriate time to refresh and rebrand LCC's presence in the borough.

Get Sutton Cycling is about ensuring many more people in Sutton can choose to cycle for some of their local journeys.
Get Sutton Cycling is about transport, mobility and inclusivity for all of Sutton's residents.
Get Sutton Cycling is about Sutton aspiring to become one of London's exemplary cycling boroughs.
Get Sutton Cycling is about Sutton leading the way to help make Britain a cycle-friendly nation.

But importantly, Get Sutton Cycling is about making Sutton an even more attractive place in which to live and work. In many ways, Get Sutton Cycling is more about Sutton than it is about cycling.

Get Sutton Cycling supporters | Cheam Park | May 2014   *Photo: Charlotte Gilhooly*

Although Get Sutton Cycling is primarily a forum for London Cycling Campaign members who reside in the London Borough of Sutton, anyone who has an interest in cycling in the borough is welcome to contribute to the discussions and get involved!

1: OUR KEY MESSAGES

- We welcome the new Strategy and strongly support the Council's vision to make cycling a natural choice for people of all ages and backgrounds for more of their trips in and through the borough. However, we are disappointed with the lack of ambition in practical terms, the limited proposals in the action plan (many of which are far from new), and the very relaxed timescale.

- We welcome the aspiration to deliver a step-change in cycling in the borough. In order for this to be successfully achieved, we believe that a step-change in the approach the Council takes to cycling is required. Although the draft Strategy is definitely a step in the right direction, there needs to be more of a recognition that cycling is for the many and not just for the few.

- The case for cycling, and the many benefits it can have for society in general, has to be made to ensure there is public support. For the case to be successfully made, political support is paramount. We consider there to be a lack of detail in the Strategy on how the case will be made in garnering public support for the broader vision.

- Cycling can and does thrive in towns and cities where there are high levels of income and high levels of car ownership, but there is a long way to go before cycling fulfills its potential to improve the life of the citizens of Sutton.

2: ASPECTS WE LIKE ABOUT THE DRAFT CYCLING DELIVERY STRATEGY

- We like the Council's key vision: "Our vision is to make cycling a natural choice for people of all ages, backgrounds, and ethnicities, for more of their trips in and through the borough". [Page 2: 1.0]

- We like the recognition that it is necessary to "set out a plan for delivering a step-change in cycling starting now, and extending into the next ten years and beyond". [Page 2; 1.2]

- We appreciate the fact that "There is now, like seldom before, the political will, ambition and funding to get more people cycling, more safely and more often", that people "are demanding better networks", and that it is necessary to ensure that "funding for cycling is used in the best possible way". [Page 2; 1.4]

- We are pleased "the Council fully supports the Mayor's Vision for Cycling", and that the Council is keen to help deliver its part "of the cycling revolution in outer London". [Page 2; 1.5]

- It is good to know that the Council is "ambitious about increasing cycling in the borough", and is committed to take "practical, innovative steps….. to deliver a step-change in cycling". We welcome the acknowledgment that this will require not only the "help of our stakeholders" but also the "support of our residents". [Page 2; 1.6]

- We note the importance of the Cycling Strategy's role in helping deliver the objectives of the Sustainable Transport Strategy. [Page 3; 1.9 | Page 4; Table 1.1]

- The fact that the Cycling Strategy is to be "a live document", "will be reviewed and updated at regular intervals by the Council to ensure the forward plan remains relevant, and fully aligned with our vision and aims", and will grow in size in order to "develop further guides, standards and best practice principles to enable and support its delivery" is particularly encouraging. [Page 3; 1.10]

- We approve of the inclusion of the Road User Hierarchy, a key component of the Sustainable Transport Strategy, "which sets out how road users and associated transport schemes should be prioritised within Sutton". This includes the clear statement that "The hierarchy prioritises consideration of pedestrians and cyclists above local and non-local motorised traffic". [Page 8; 2.18]

- It is promising to note that opportunities will be identified to deliver "junction improvements", "protected space for cyclists" (including consideration of light-touch or full segregation), the "rationalisation of car parking and loading bays", and "more cycle parking" as part of all future transport and regeneration projects. [Pages 13-14; 3.9]

- The declaration that "quality space for cycling in the borough" is to be delivered in the longer-term, and will include protection and segregation where there is opportunity to do so, is reason to be cautiously optimistic. The development of further Quietways, along with outline-proposals for a number of major cycling schemes, opportunities to seek additional funding, and working with TfL "to ensure that our enthusiasm for delivering a step-change in cycling provision is communicated" is very reassuring. [Page 14; 3.10]

- We are pleased with the recognition that "…further Quietways should be seen as a real opportunity to build upon the current network….. and should not simply be an opportunity to reinvigorate the former LCN". [Page 14; 3.10]

- We appreciate the statement "We want to make sure that all streets help new and existing cyclists feel safe and welcome" and, in regard to 20mph, the pledge "to learn from the implementation of more extensive 20mph limits in inner London boroughs, and identify how they could be effectively applied in certain locations". [Page 16; 3.14]

- The pledge to "work with local stakeholders to identify opportunities for further 'low traffic zones' where through-access by car is restricted and low traffic neighbourhoods are created, which maintain cycle and pedestrian access" is a particularly welcome commitment. [Page 16; 3.15]

- It is good to know that the Council aim to achieve "a modal shift from the car to cycling", and that the "focus should be on making it easy to cycle for short, everyday trips to destinations such as town centres, stations and schools". It is important that a larger proportion of such short trips are transferred from the car and not from public transport, and that is one reason why the introduction of low traffic neighbourhoods needs to be a high priority. [Page 17; 3.21]

- The commitment to identify opportunities "to secure funding for improvements to the local transport infrastructure, including improved provision for cyclists" as a result of "new major developments within the borough" is welcome. Evidence of how this process is being realised in practice would make a useful case study for the Strategy[1]. There needs to be stronger recognition that specific improvements for "cyclists" are improvements for "everyone". [Page 17; 3.21]

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[1] Earlier in 2015, Develop Sutton reported: "With almost £400m investment being pumped into the town centre, Sutton is staking its claim as a place to do business". It would be useful if the Strategy used this as a case study, and declared how much of the £400m that is being pumped into the town centre over the next five years has been earmarked for cycling infrastructure.

- We are pleased that the Council intends to "work with new schools and schools undergoing major expansions to ensure that safe cycling routes to schools are implemented", in addition to securing "well-sited and covered cycle parking". Again, there are opportunities for case studies to highlight scenarios[2]. [Page 18; 3.21]

- It is encouraging to note that there is recognition that "good physical design and high quality infrastructure also has a role to play in designing out the potential for conflict", and a commitment to design and deliver new schemes "in accordance with the latest London Cycling Design Standards (LCDS)". [Page 19; 3.26]

- We wish the Council well in "seeking funding from TfL to provide a range of transport interventions for Beddington Lane" and anticipate that interventions for cycling will feature strongly. [Page 20; 3.30]

- Presenting a clear case for cycling, and a commitment "to make information about cycling accessible, engaging and convincing" are very welcome actions. Similarly, marketing opportunities and initiatives, such as the example given to produce "maps highlighting new or extended routes" that "could be distributed to all residents near the route prior to or immediately after launch", are applauded too. [Page 21; 3.32]

- We very much welcome a commitment to "ensure that the borough's cycle network is accessible to all types of bikes and cyclists, including those with disabilities and users of mobility scooters, and is designed to avoid conflict with those with visual or physical impairments". [Page 21; 3.32]

- We are very pleased that there is a culture of "cross-departmental working and cross-referencing of policies" with the Council, and that opportunities for Smarter Travel and the Transportation Section to work with pollution control and public health have been identified. [Page 21; 3.34].

- We are delighted that there is the intention to plan and deliver cycling projects in a more collaborative manner, and that this will include the setting-up of "an internal Cycling Advisory Group within the Council" to consolidate links with associated wider outcomes including public health. [Page 22; 3.37]

- It is of great reassurance to know that there is a commitment to "ensure that all officers involved with the commissioning and designing of highways, transport and public realm schemes" will be "fully aware of current cycling design standards and best practice". [Page 22; 3.37 | Page 27; Q5.1]

- It goes without saying that we very much welcome a commitment to "work with external stakeholder groups to identify further opportunities for collaborative working and the exchange of ideas", and that "this could involve moving the quarterly Cycle Forum Meeting to the evening so more people could attend". [Page 22; 3.37 | Page 27; Q5.1]

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[2] A Transport Assessment prepared by consultants Atkins in support of a planning application for a new Hackbridge Primary School (June 2015), makes interesting reading. Proposals for this major development include the provision of a minimum two-metre wide footway along the length of the school site on the eastern side of London Road and, "in order to maximise pupil safety and maintain visibility", there is a recommendation to introduce School Keep Clear (zig-zag) markings along the school's "entrance zone". Why does it take a school expansion to facilitate pavement widening on eastern side of London Road (A237), close to a known accident hot-spot? Are these interventions the best, the most ambitious, ideas? If so, the prospects for sustainable travel in Hackbridge any time soon, do not look bright. Our Space for Cycling 'ward ask' for Wandle Valley provides a far more strategic vision.

3: ASPECTS OF THE DRAFT STRATEGY THAT GIVE US CAUSE FOR CONCERN

- The opening paragraph of the Introduction is disingenuous. We do not believe there is sufficient evidence to support the claim that "The London Borough of Sutton has a good track record in taking positive action on cycling". A *long* track record of *limited* action would arguably be more appropriate. Although the borough deserves to be proud of the achievement in delivering a 75% increase in cycling through the Smarter Travel Sutton project (2006-2009), this increase means nothing without numbers. The 75% increase equates to a mode share change from a very low base of 1% to a very low level 1.75% and, as noted elsewhere, this momentum has not been maintained. [Page 2; 1.1]

- The Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, published his Vision for Cycling in March 2013. In the two years since its publication this document, described in the draft cycling strategy as a 'game changer', has received a lot of publicity. As part of this, Sutton applied for 'mini-Holland' funding. Meanwhile, over the same two years, proposals for cycling schemes in the borough, such as converting footways to shared-use cycle paths, continue to get promoted by council officers and approved by some councillors as if this vision simply did not exist. This could be interpreted as a lack of aspiration, a lack of being aware of current issues, or perhaps unwilling to take on new challenges. Either way, it means the cycling strategy is going to have to try that much harder to "get up to speed". [Page 2; 1.3]

- The lengthy Policy section of the Strategy is testimony to the production of a vast array of 'frameworks', 'plans', 'visions', and 'strategies' that have been created at various government levels concerning cycling, and the consequent committee time that has been spent discussing them. It contrasts woefully with the local reality on the ground. [Pages 5 to 9]

- Although "reducing car dependency" is declared as an important goal for Local Authorities, there are no specific examples in the Draft Strategy of how this to be achieved beyond vague suggestions around "improving" or "encouraging" the use of "sustainable transport options". If motorists are, in effect, to be discouraged from using their cars, then both the justification for this, and the benefits that comes from it, have to be clearly stated. [Page 5; 2.2]

- The stated targets for increasing cycle mode share (from the new Sustainable Transport Strategy) "from a baseline of 1% to 2.2% in the short term (2017) and to 4% by 2025" are abstract and difficult to understand. We would love to see cycling double in the next eighteen months, but consider that highly unlikely and unachievable. On the other hand, to take ten years to reach the target of 4% (already below the mode share of some inner London boroughs) appears to be unambitious. [Page 8; 2.17]

- Although it is excellent to see the Road User Hierarchy, a component of the Sustainable Transport Strategy, incorporated in the Cycling Strategy, we await finding a location in Sutton where the hierarchy is actually implemented. [Page 8; Figure 2.1; 2.18]

- In relation to the development of the Quietways, we are surprised to read that these appear under the "what we do" sub-heading to the first objective, rather than "what we will do". The development of these routes will be in the future, and we cannot see how these will be "delivered within the short to medium term" given the scope and magnitude of the project. Medium term perhaps. [Page 11; 3.6]

- There is considerable disappointment to read that the "overarching principle for the Quietways infrastructure is 'lines and signs' rather than major new infrastructure". This is not how the Mayor's Vision for Cycling describes Quietways. New infrastructure will be required. Some of this may be relatively minor, but there will be major infrastructure requirements too. Of course, the case needs to be made to gain public support as well. [Page 11; 3.4]

- There is some concern over the caveat "as far as possible" in regard to how "..all new schemes or improvement works should, as far as possible, be designed and delivered with the latest London Cycling Design Standards ...". To ensure that "as far as possible" is not interpreted as meaning "too difficult" the

Strategy needs to qualify and expand on this, and cite likely examples of the circumstances under which exemption would be justified. [Page 13; 3.9]

- "A full audit of our current cycle network to investigate how specific infrastructure for cycling and the network as a whole performs against the LCDS" is welcome, but we would like to see this process start in the short term rather than in the medium term as specified. We understand that prior to a Cycling Level of Service (CloS) assessment being made, there is a requirement to review the existing conditions, develop analysis on route density (ideally no more than 400 metre separation), make a classification of streets against bikeability levels, and carry out area porosity analysis to identify of gateways for routes. These are important, and essential procedures, and relatively simple actions to organise and implement. [Page 13; 3.9]

- Identifying "quick-win, short-term actions" is understandable. However, suggesting that "surface improvements, maintenance and signage" is amongst them does not seem appropriate for the Strategy. If Sutton was the pro-cycling borough it claims to be, such actions would be ongoing and street surfaces and signage would not be in need of repair. [Page 13; 3.9]

- The development of "implementation-ready … high-impact schemes" that can be taken forward "within the shortest possible timeframe" on occasions "when funding opportunities arise", sounds, in theory, to be an extremely useful proposal. In practice, though, the process of delivering high-impact schemes is likely to meet with demanding and challenging resistance from some quarters. The Strategy needs to set out how such issues will be addressed, to ensure the case has been made, well ahead of receiving any financial commitment. [Page 14; 3.10]

- The claim that interventions to "deliver packages of measures to reduce traffic volumes and speeds through residential areas to create environments suitable for cycling" is included under what we do, is interesting. Presumably, if the extent of the impact of these interventions had been high there would be many more people cycling in the borough. The addition of the phrase "over the years" only seems to further emphasise the low priority that has been given to cycling. A stronger statement than "there are further opportunities that we wish to explore" is required to give more confidence that there is a true commitment to actually do so. [Page 16; 3.11 and 3.15]

- "Working to create safer environments for everyone on main road corridors" is important. The Strategy needs to state precisely, though, how the incorporation of measures to benefit "all users" in the corridor safety schemes will result in a landscape that will feel safe enough to entice more people to cycle. All of these projects must be taken as opportunities to attempt to reduce motor traffic volume and levels, and ideally incorporate cycling infrastructure too. [Page 16; 3.11 and 3.15]

- The review of "existing one-way streets" in the Borough seems to have been under review for quite some time not just "in recent years". [Page 16; 3.13]

- There is concern that the Council's current policy, piecemeal approach, and method of implementation to 20mph is inconsistent and ineffective, with the result that many existing 20 mph zones do little for cycling[3]. [Page 16; 3.15]

- Contraflow cycling is welcome, but something in addition to lines and signs may be required. [Page 16; 3.15]

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[3] In West Street, Carshalton, the speed limit is constantly being exceeded. Following implementation of 20mph along Thornton Road, St Helier, the narrow streets leading from Thornton Road remained at 30mph. Not only is this quite bizarre, it has also resulted in there being more 30mph signs on show along Thornton Road than there are 20mph signs. The most recent implementation of 20mph in the borough is believed to have been Collingwood Road, Sutton. Only part of the street was converted to 20mph in 2013. However, this was not the part where most of the shops are located, or where some of the narrowest pavements in the borough are situated, or the part that forms an alignment of London Cycling Network. Meanwhile, when some residents in Grosvenor Avenue, Carshalton, requested 20mph for their street in 2012, the Council prevaricated for over twelve months and then overturned the request on the grounds that the police would not be able to enforce it. Grosvenor Avenue also forms part of the LCN, and is a known rat-run.

- "Low traffic neighbourhoods" is a concept to be greatly encouraged, but needs careful attention to detail. At the few locations in Sutton where these arrangements are currently in place, car parking often obstructs the route for cyclists and pedestrians. [Page 16; 3.15]

- The requirement for cycle parking is welcome, but development plans should also review safe routes to the cycle parking and consider infrastructural changes to facilitate this. [Page 17; 3.16 and 3.21]

- We would like the Strategy to include details of funding that has been secured for each of the junior school expansions, and what this had actually delivered. Future projects need to focus on securing funding that provides improvements beyond "the immediate environment around the school". [Page 17; 3.18]

- This section of the Strategy details measures taken to educate cyclists and lorry drivers, but not the "average motorist". We would like to see an initiative to encourage motorists to give space to cyclists. [Page 19; 3.26]

- While we welcome the commitment to training, we question the degree to which it is 'key' to "encouraging and instilling positive and safe interactions between cyclists and other road users", especially compared to the contribution of good infrastructure. [Page 19; 3.26]

- Given the unpleasant reality of cycling along Beddington Lane (B272), with so many HGVs, the paragraph relating to the Pollution Control project and Mayor's Air Quality Fund is completely inadequate. We would be interested to learn how well the information on local cycle routes and cycle parking locations is received by local businesses during the final phases of the project. [Page 20; 3.28]

- Education, training and marketing are all welcome initiatives. However, the wording of this section needs to be amended in recognition of the fact that the major barrier to wider participation in cycling is poor cycling infrastructure. [Page 21; 3.32]

- As an aside, it is interesting to note that the word "encourage" features twenty-one times in the Strategy, but "facilitate" only on three occasions.

4: OTHER CONCERNS

- The last occasion on which Sutton Council published intentions specifically for cycling in the borough was in a Cycling Action Plan produced in about 2006/2007. The document was not publicised at the time, and has not been promoted since. There is no reference to it, or details of any progress having been made on it, in the 2015 draft Cycling Strategy. This gives a lot of concern that the new Strategy will just end up on a shelf.

- The Smarter Travel Sutton travel behaviour change initiative (2006-2009), resulted in a change in the cycling mode share of all journeys in the borough from 1.00% to 1.75%. The stated intention in 2009, reiterated in the Foreword to the Draft Sustainable Transport Strategy (October 2014), was to build on this success. If this was a serious intention, we are concerned as to why it has taken six years to develop a cycling strategy.

- The Sustainable Transport Strategy, approved at a meeting of the Environment and Neighbourhood Committee in March 2015, first appeared on the council's website at the end of July 2015 through a link provided on the consultation page for the draft Cycling Delivery Strategy. As of early September, a search for 'Sustainable Transport Strategy' at sutton.gov.uk fails to return the document. As we stated in our response to the consultation on draft Sustainable Transport Strategy, the document requires full promotion. Without high visibility, there will be serious implications on delivery. There is concern that the Council is not giving sustainable transport sufficient priority.

- Confidence in the Council's ability to make cycling happen, continues to be undermined:

  o In May 2014 candidates standing for council elections across London were asked to consider supporting one specific action that would help to begin the process of making their local streets feel safe and inviting for everyone to cycle. As of September 2015, only ten of the borough's 54 councillors have shown their support for this London-wide Space for Cycling initiative, equating to the lowest support by councillors in any of the 32 London boroughs bar two.

  o In September 2014 we were told to expect a review of our Space for Cycling 'ward asks' within a month, and nearly twelve months later have yet to receive that review.

  o On presenting a petition to the Leader of the Council on 23 July 2015, signed by over 400 of Sutton's residents asking for stronger commitment to cycling, we are told that there is the political will, and that we could expect to receive a formal response. Six weeks later and we have yet to receive that response.

- One indicator of how seriously the Council takes cycling, is the degree to which existing infrastructure is maintained. Currently, whether it is the routine sweeping of paths, periodic checks on signage, or major repairs to path surfaces, this is to all intents and purposes completely lacking.

Could this be Beddington Lane?

Could this be the new Hackbridge Primary School, London Road?

5: THE OBJECTIVES AND THE ACTION PLAN

- In this section, each of the six stated objectives is considered in the context of the action plan.

- The action plan tables, showing the individual measures associated with each objective along with the expected timeframes for delivery, have been reproduced from the Strategy. Not that the column identifying the committed or potential funding source for each action has been omitted.

- We have added five columns, the three of which give our recommendations in respect to the timeframes for each of the measures. Where these differ from the Strategy, they are highlighted in red.

- The final two columns are labeled 'I' and 'D', and we have used these to categorise each proposal.

    o 'I' = Importance (in terms of outcome, i.e. which actions will deliver the most): High, Medium or Low

    o 'D' = Difficulty (in terms political acceptance, and making the case): Challenging, Moderate or Easy.

Importance				Difficulty		
High	Medium	Low		Challenging	Moderate	Easy

- The timeframes, as detailed on page 23 of the Strategy, are as follows

    o Short term: 2015/16   April 2015 to March 2016

    o Medium term: 2016/17 – 2018/19   April 2016 to March 2019

    o Long term: 2019/20 – 2024/25   April 2019 to March 2025

- Measures indicated as having High 'Importance', but which are deemed Easy in terms of 'Difficulty', could be 'quick-win' areas and really considered as activities for the short term. There would be the expectation that for all other measures of High 'Importance', preparatory work would be considered in the short term regardless of the proposed timeframe on delivery.

5.1: Making Sutton a more attractive borough for cycling and create a high quality cycle route network

- **There is plenty of evidence to support the claim that the provision of safe and attractive space to cycle is what will entice not only greater numbers, but also a more diverse cross-section of society to embrace everyday cycling. If this objective is achieved in its fullest sense, all the other five objectives in the Strategy will fall into place. The focus here needs to go beyond simply making Sutton a more attractive borough for cycling though. Sutton needs to have a comprehensive, high-quality, and properly joined up cycle network, where people do not have to cycle more than 400m to find a parallel route of similar quality. This will mean using filtered permeability to close rat runs and building segregated cycle paths on busier roads. Anything less than this is unacceptable.**

- To achieve this aim, public support is crucial. Sutton's own vision for cycling needs to be clearly stated and discussed in a wide arena over the coming months. Consultations on individual, highly contentious, schemes will have a much greater chance of receiving acceptance if residents are aware of the bigger picture. Councillors in Local Committee areas, and agencies tasked with delivering the cycle route network, will have key roles to play in this. The Council's policy intentions outlined in the Sustainable Transport Strategy (June 2015) will help support the objectives, especially if particular emphasis is given to the Road User Hierarchy, where consideration of the needs of pedestrians and cyclists is placed first and consideration of non-local motor traffic last.

- **The successful delivery of Sutton's first two Quietways is highly important, and there is a need to set a high standard from the outset. It would not be acceptable for the Quietways to be planned, let alone delivered, prior to an audit of the existing infrastructure and engagement with residents. Consequently, it is anticipated that the Quietways will be planned in the short term, but not delivered until the medium term. 'Lines and signs' are attributes that will aid legibility, but major infrastructure including segregation, junction treatments, cycle-only traffic signals, will also be required. There is the expectation that route alignment will be direct, with the difference between the route length and the straight-line distance kept to a minimum. Delivery must be in accordance with the London Cycling Design Standards, and there is an expectation that all sections of each route will achieve a score of at least 60% on the Cycling Level of Service assessment. The longer-term aim is for compliance of 70% or above.**

OBJECTIVE 1		Draft Strategy			Our recommendation				
Ref.	Item	Short	Medium	Long	Short	Medium	Long	I	D
Q1.1 [p24]	Quietway 141: Worcester Park to Croydon Work with TfL to plan and deliver Worcester Park to Croydon Quietway route.	✔	✔		*Start to plan* ✔	*Continue planning > deliver* ✔		H	C
Q1.2 [p24]	Quietway 142: Sutton to Morden Work with TfL to plan and deliver Sutton to Morden Quietway route.	✔	✔		*Start to plan* ✔	*Continue planning > deliver* ✔		H	C
Q1.3 [p24]	Extension of the cycleway from Boscombe Road to Green Lane Deliver a cycleway between North Cheam and Worcester Park.	✔			✔			L	E
Q1.4 [p24]	Convert Pyl Brook path to shared use for cyclists and pedestrians Sign the Pyl Brook path as shared use to link up existing cycle routes.	✔			✔			L	E
Q1.5 [p24]	Improve the cycleway through Oaks Park to Woodmansterne Road Improvements to NCN 20 and Avenue Verte route	✔			✔			M[4]	E
Q1.6 [p24]	Green Wrythe Lane pedestrian and cycle facilities Clarify details and aims of the scheme with TfL and local stakeholders, and progress as appropriate.	✔			✔			L	E
Q1.7 [p24]	Audit of existing network and infrastructure Audit network and infrastructure using LCDS good design outcomes to identify links and junctions at which provision for cycling could be improved.		✔		✔	✔		H	E[5]
Q1.8 [p24]	Identify opportunities for quick-win enhancements and extensions to the cycle network (informed by audit) Quick-win enhancements to network, including junction improvements, protected space for cyclists, rationalisation of car parking and loading bays and more cycle parking.	✔	✔		✔	✔		H	E[6]
Q1.9 [p24]	Further Quietways Work with TfL to support implementation and delivery of initial Quietways within London Borough of Sutton, and identify additional routes to be considered for following phase of Quietways delivery.		✔	✔			✔	H	C

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[4] Improving cycleway through Oaks Park is of Moderate importance and is Easy to deliver. Whereas, making improvements to the NCN 20 and Avenue Verte (e.g. Park Lane) is of High importance, and potentially Challenging to deliver.

[5] Audit of existing network considered Easy to deliver given the allocated 'medium' timescale. However, as the audit is of High importance, and is required sooner rather than later, there will be additional pressure on funding and personnel. Consequently, delivery could be categorized as Moderate.

[6] The identification of quick-win enhancements is relatively Easy. However, the delivery of improved junctions, protected space for cycling and rationalisation of car parking, could place this component of Objective 1 into the Moderate or even Challenging category.

OBJECTIVE 1		Draft Strategy			Our recommendation				
Ref.	Item	Short	Medium	Long	Short	Medium	Long	I	D
Q1.10 [p24]	**Additional major cycling schemes** Review Mini-Holland planned schemes to prioritise schemes that will deliver a substantial impact on cycling levels.		✔			✔	✔	H	C
Q1.10b [p25]	**Additional major cycling schemes** Develop prioritised schemes to feasibility stage designs and identify suitable funding opportunities for implementation .		✔	✔		✔	✔	H	E
Add Q1.11	*Space for Cycling 'ward asks'* Review, discuss, liaise with TfL, prioritise				✔			H	E[7]

5.2: Make Sutton a safer borough for cycling

- **Reducing the speed and number of motor vehicles travelling on the borough's roads is critical for the borough to feel safe for cycling. Segregation on busy roads should be used on the basis of need, not opportunity. Motorised traffic on residential roads should be reduced to a minimum through the use of filtered permeability. Simply creating 20mph zones will not be enough – streets really need to look as though they are designed for lower speed, to get lower speed. Designing for lower speed will not be achievable on all streets at the outset, so enforcement will play a part initially. Limits aren't a panacea, but are a part of the argument for the purpose of streets. Area-wide, ideally borough-wide, implementation would bring costs down, give a clear message, and set the agenda. Meanwhile, a wider application of interventions such as closing roads to through traffic except for people on foot or on bike, the use of contra-flow lanes, and making space for cycling, will help design-in lower speeds. All streets need to be fully accessible by people when they are walking or cycling, so all one-way streets need contraflow for cyclists.**

- Identifying locations to establish low traffic neighbourhoods is very much supported. This needs to be given the highest priority. On the issue of appropriate locations, arguably most residential areas would qualify especially if set in the context of reflecting the primary purpose of streets as somewhere pleasant to live. When it comes to appropriateness, it is possibly more rational to consider the fact that so many residential streets carry an inordinate amount of inappropriate traffic. Trial street closures, possibly through the Play Streets initiative, could help move the debate forward. By moving towards a principle that urban streets are primarily for people, and that cars are guests, will help the case.

- **It is often said that closing roads puts increased pressure on nearby streets, traffic congestion intensifies, and one street's gain is another street's loss. If this were to be the case in every situation, not only would it suggest that something really needed to have been done a long time ago, but it would also make the case for closing streets on an area-wide basis (which needs to be given serious consideration). The reality is, when streets are closed, as has recently happened for a period of a week or more in Robin Hood Lane, Sutton, and Green Lane, Worcester Park, traffic adapts and life goes on. Obviously, careful deliberation and planning is required, and the case needs to be made. Fortunately, there are now many opportunities to learn from other schemes that are currently in various stages of progression across London. The most important aspect to recognise is that the need to unravel traffic modes is the key to the delivery of cycling.**

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[7] The Space for Cycling 'ward asks' have already been identified (2014), and therefore the assessment of these ought to be Easy.

OBJECTIVE 2		Draft Strategy			Our Recommendation				
Ref.	Item	Short	Medium	Long	Short	Medium	Long	I	D
Q2.1a [p25]	**20mph zones** Continue to implement 20mph zone, subject to fundings.	✔	✔		✔	✔		H	C
Q2.1b [p25]	**20mph zones** Identify location for pilot 20mph neighbourhood zone and develop consultation and delivery plan. Implement as appropriate and review effectiveness.		✔		✔			H	C
Q2.2 [p25]	**Contra-flow cycle lane in the one way section of Manor Lane, Sutton** Deliver contra-flow lane to improve permeability.	✔			✔			M	E
Q2.3 [p25]	**Contra-flow cycle lanes** Identify additional locations where contra-flow cycle lanes are appropriate, or require improvements, and deliver more and improved contra-flow cycle lanes to enhance cycle access in residential areas.		✔		✔	✔		H	E
Q2.4 [p25]	**Filtered permeability** Identify locations where it is appropriate to create reduced or traffic free environments in residential areas.		✔		✔	✔		H	C[8]

5.3: Encourage a shift from the car to cycling for shorter journeys

- **To achieve any meaningful shift from the car to bicycle, cycling must be made at least as easy as driving. Not only does this require routes that are direct, quick to navigate and feel safe to those who do not currently cycle, it also requires plentiful cycle parking. Cycling is a true door-to-door form of transport, but when residents have nowhere to conveniently keep their vehicle at home a lot of the convenience disappears. One option could be on-street Bikehangars. Not only do they make statement, they take up less space than a car and can hold six bikes. People also need to see that cycling is a safe activity – separation from fast travelling motor vehicles is the only way to achieve this.**

- Of the measures identified for this for objective, essentially to enable everyday cycling to key destinations, the highest priority is to ensure that every opportunity is taken to secure funding for cycling improvements. The potential benefits to local businesses for cycle-friendly access, cannot be understated.

OBJECTIVE 3		Draft Strategy			Our Recommendation				
Ref.	Item	Short	Medium	Long	Short	Medium	Long	I	D
Q3.1a [p25]	**Cycle parking** Review current provision and quality of cycle parking across borough and identify where improved or additional cycle parking is required through the Borough Cycling Programme.		✔		✔	✔		M	E
Q3.1b [p25]	**Cycle parking** Require secure cycle parking and provision for cyclists as part of new developments, including residential developments. Review minimum cycle parking quantities associated with new developments and consider case for adopting TfL's cycle parking standards and developing borough-specific cycle parking design guidance.		✔			✔		M	E
Q3.2a [p25]	**Town centre cycling improvements** Identify suitable infrastructure improvements such as contra-flow cycle lanes and implement contra-flows.	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔		H	M
Q3.2b [p26]	**Town centre cycling improvements** Work with developers to secure additional or improved provision for cyclists within town centres.	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔		H	E
Q3.2c [p26]	**Town centre cycling improvements** Internal collaboration to ensure cycling infrastructure schemes are on the CIL list	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔		H	E

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[8] Identifying locations is likely to be relatively Easy and needs to be considered as part of a wider Network Plan. Delivering could be potentially Challenging.

OBJECTIVE 3		Draft Strategy			Our Recommendation				
Ref.	Item	Short	Medium	Long	Short	Medium	Long	I	D
Q3.3a [p26]	School Travel Plans All London Borough of Sutton schools to continue to be supported in the development, review and update of their travel plans. School travel plans should include actions to encourage and facilitate cycling to school.	✔	✔		✔	✔		M	E
Q3.3b [p26]	School Travel Plans Continue with Safer Routes to School programme to improve cycling provision on routes to schools.	✔	✔		✔	✔		M	E
Q3.4c [p26]	School Travel Plans Secure developer contributions as part of planning process for schools expansion for enhanced and extended cycle network, and provision of facilities for cyclists at schools.		✔		✔	✔		H	E
Q3.4 [p26]	Cycle to School Partnership Work with TfL to deliver Cycle to School Partnership programme in London Borough of Sutton, subject to confirmation of funding secured and delivery timescales.	✔	✔		✔	✔		M	E
Q3.5 [p26]	Cycle to stations Continue to work in partnership with station operators to support cycling to stations and bike-rail journeys, including a review of cycle parking at stations and work to identify required improvements on key routes to stations.	✔	✔		✔	✔		M	M

5.4: Encourage safe and considerate behaviour by all road users

- **Improving the education and training of all road users is one specific measure in a series of programs that will help increase levels of cycling, but cyclists and motorists are not the same in terms of risk. Having confidence and skills to cycle and encourage positive and safe interactions between cyclists and other road, is highly desirable, but Bikeability must not be a substitute for cycling infrastructure. Good physical design and high quality infrastructure is the key to designing out the potential for conflict between people on bikes and those in motor vehicles. Without dedicated fit-for-purpose infrastructure, cycling for day-to-day journeys will remain limited to those prepared to do battle with traffic. The very young, the elderly, and many women will continue to be effectively excluded. People may well be experienced cyclists, but that does not mean they always enjoy the experience of cycling. Good infrastructure will make people feel safer, and it is that feeling of safety that will make the difference.**

- It is essential that thorough assessments be made of the options for segregation on all the busy high-profile routes across the borough. Continuous liaison with Transport for London is imperative.

- *It is not clear why the measure to investigate segregated routes is included under this particular objective.*

OBJECTIVE 4		Draft Strategy			Our Recommendation				
Ref.	Item	Short	Medium	Long	Short	Medium	Long	I	D
Q4.1 [p26]	Bikeability cycle training Continue to deliver programme of cycle training for adults and children, and extend Level 3 / intensive offer.	✔	✔		✔	✔		M	E
Q4.2 [p26]	Safer Urban Driving (SUD) training Continue SUD training.	✔	✔		✔	✔		M	E
Q4.3 [p26]	Safer Lorry Scheme Implement Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) in accordance with TfL Safer Lorries Scheme.	✔			✔			M	E
Q4.4 [p26]	Technology to assist safety Investigate technology to assist safety of cyclists	✔	✔	✔		✔	?	M	C[9]

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[9] Technology to assist safety is speculative and depends on outside agencies.

OBJECTIVE 4		Draft Strategy			Our Recommendation				
Ref.	Item	Short	Medium	Long	Short	Medium	Long	I	D
Q4.5 [p27]	**Segregated routes** Identify locations on heavily trafficked arterial routes within the borough where segregation is appropriate, and work with local residents and stakeholders to propose and implement solutions. Where these locations are on TLRN (TfL routes) we will work with TfL on the recommendation and implementation of improvements.		✔	✔	*Start to identify* ✔	*Work with residents > plan > deliver* ✔	*Deliver*	H	C

5.5: Create a cycling culture by promoting cycling to a wider range of people

- **The integration of the planning and delivery of cycling with key stakeholders, to maximise public health and wider outcomes and embed a cycling culture within the council and across the borough, is strongly supported. All three of the measures identified for this objective have high importance, and given that they are, in theory at least, relatively easy to deliver, the short-term timeframe would seem appropriate.**

- The transfer of public health responsibilities to local authorities in 2013 has increased the recognition of the profound effects that factors other than health services have on people's health. The role that walking and cycling can play in ensuring that people put active travel into their day-to-day routines, and so reduce the risk of an number of illnesses, is being seen as increasingly important factor. Nineteen out of twenty people over 65 in London never cycle. These are the people who in many ways could benefit the most from the gentle exercise of cycling short journeys. They are currently being denied the health benefits of cycling and the joy of cycling. We need cycling that is safe, inclusive and joyful, and the sooner the various stakeholders recognise this and act upon it the better.

- **The commissioning of a comprehensive travel survey is very welcome. Given that public support for cycling is essential if the first two objectives outlined in this Strategy are to be successfully delivered, the opportunity that this survey affords to engage with residents should be maximised. In addition to ascertaining current cycling levels and the propensity to cycle, the survey process could also be used to inform residents about the bigger vision for cycling in the borough and to raise awareness of the issues. Furthermore, questions to elicit their views on the type of interventions required to bring stress-free cycling to their area would be a helpful exercise to begin the process of discussion. In this way it would not only gauge the likely level of support, but also promote the ideas well ahead of the development of scheme proposals. Targeting the survey to particular areas of the borough, perhaps to locations close to the route of a Quietway or an individual ward (for example, Beddington South where all three councillors have shown support for the safe routes to school 'ward ask') could be an option to consider.**

OBJECTIVE 5		Draft Strategy			Our Recommendation				
Ref.	Item	Short	Medium	Long	Short	Medium	Long	I	D
Q5.1 [p27]	**Improved working with internal stakeholders** Set-up internal Cycling Advisory Group to identify opportunities for collaborative working, particularly between transport and pollution control (air quality), and public health.	✔			✔			H	E
Q5.2 [p27]	**Working with external stakeholders** Engage with external stakeholders (i.e. Get Sutton Cycling/London Cycling Campaign) to identify how a more collaborative approach to cycling projects could be achieved. This will include a commitment to meet at least quarterly.	✔			✔			H	E
Q5.3 [p27]	**Commission a travel survey** Commission a comprehensive residents' travel survey with a focus on cycling to ascertain current cycling levels and propensity to cycle	✔			✔			H	E

5.6: Actively promote cycling within the council's Sustainable Transport Strategy

- **This objective to actively promote cycling through education, training and marketing, with focus on vulnerable and harder to reach groups is desirable. Arguably, however, it need not take the development of a strategy to deliver the measures associated with this. Many of these interventions are relatively low priority in the big scheme of things, are relatively easy to deliver, and have been ongoing for a number of years. Many of the barriers to cycling for vulnerable and harder to reach groups would be removed with the introduction of high-quality infrastructure.**

- The key thing is to actively support a strong, robust, Strategy that has the full support of the Council, and engage with residents.

OBJECTIVE 6		Draft Strategy			Our Recommendation				
Ref.	Item	Short	Medium	Long	Short	Medium	Long	I	D
Q6.1 [p27]	Bike maintenance for young people (Cytech qualification) Deliver this project in 2015/16 and investigate opportunities for match-funding and continuation in future years.	✔			✔	✔		L	E
Q6.2 [p27]	Beddington Lane air quality / cycling business engagement project Deliver this project in 2015/16 (will include design and distribution of information about air quality and cycling to businesses in Beddington Lane).	✔			✔			M	E
Q6.3 [p27]	Clean Air 4 Schools Deliver this project in 2015/16 and investigate opportunities for match-funding and continuation in future years.	✔			✔	✔		L	E
Q6.4q [p27]	Travel awareness initiatives Work with major employers to encourage employees to cycle to work. This will include workplace events such as Dr Bike and cycle training opportunities.	✔			✔	✔		L	E
Q6.4b [027]	Travel awareness initiatives Deliver town centre cycling events – Dr Bike, bike marking.	✔			✔	✔		L	E
Q6.5 [p27]	Get Active Wandle project Deliver this project in 2015/16 with the London Boroughs of Merton, Croydon and Wandsworth.	✔			✔			M	E
Q6.6 [p28]	Develop cycling events calendar/programme of travel awareness events Develop a calendar of events to promote cycling and instill a cycling culture within the borough. Events could include led cycle rides through the borough, car free event days, workplace cycle/active travel challenges and cycle races in partnership with British Cycling.		✔			✔		M (H[10])	E (M)
Q6.7 [p28]	Cycle route maps Make cycling maps available online.	✔			✔	✔		M[11]	E
Q6.8 [p28]	Barriers to cycling research for vulnerable and harder to reach groups Undertake research to aid further understanding of the barriers to cycling for vulnerable and harder to reach groups in the London Borough of Sutton, and develop an associated action plan to ensure all groups have opportunity to cycle in the borough.		✔			✔		H	M

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[10] High priority if awareness is expanded to include making the case for cycling. Awareness of why making streets safe and inviting for cycling needs to be progressed. The Strategy needs to be loud and clear on intent.

[11] In addition to online maps, a series of larger scale (at least 1:9,000) paper maps to be produced, but with the focus less on finding the way and more on illustrating how journeys by bike over short distances can be relatively quick. 50% of journeys under 3 miles = where can you get by bike and how long it is likely to take (at slow speed). Also larger scale maps will be useful to identify route audits.

6: SOME RECOMMENDATIONS

- For this Cycling Strategy to successfully start the process of ultimately delivering a step-change for cycling in the borough, it will require:

  - Strong political commitment locally
  - A recognition that things will be challenging and that the case, however difficult, needs to be made
  - A commitment on action, rather than just words

- The borough's new Sustainable Transport Strategy (June 2015) committed to a target of increasing cycle mode share from a baseline of 1% (average 2009/10 – 2010/11) to 2.2% by 2017 and to 4% by 2025. In other words, a four-fold (300%) increase in the number of trips by bicycle over about fifteen years (2010 – 2025). We recommend the 4% target date be brought forward to 2022[12] (equating to a four-fold increase over twelve years) and that a target of 6% is set for 2025 (more accurately reflecting, perhaps, a significant take-up in cycling aligned to a the period during which high-quality infrastructure can be expected to be more widespread across the borough (2020 -2025)).

- We would like the Strategy to provide details of how cycle use is monitored (whether by automatic traffic counters, manual counts, cordon and screenline counts, national data, surveys, etc.), and for regular updates on findings to be provided.

- The street environment in the borough is generally not conducive to attracting new people to cycling. Rather than claiming a lot has been achieved in the past, we recommend that the Strategy's focus be directed more on how a new approach will bring changes.

- The Strategy needs to give more recognition to the many challenges that are faced in the delivery of stress-free cycling, given the current propensity for even short journeys to be made by car. In cities (and suburbs) throughout Europe where high-quality cycling infrastructure is provided, and where income and high car ownership levels exist, cycling thrives. Evidence of high aspiration needs to feature strongly, as does an ability to demonstrate a renewed vigor for delivery. We would recommend closer liaison with Transport for London, closer co-operation with other agencies delivery cycling and with boroughs that are currently delivering their mini-Holland schemes, and for staff to visit other European countries to appreciate what can be done and learn from their lessons[13].

- We recommend that an additional benefit resulting from the delivery of a step-change in cycling, 'Better places for everyone', is added to the list detailed in the Introduction, and that this be more strongly promoted throughout the document:

  - A fitter, healthier and happier population;
  - Improved air quality and reduced CO_2 emissions;
  - Reduced congestion and enhanced transport efficiency;
  - Improved and enhanced mobility for those without access to cars, and better social inclusion;
  - Encouraging greater use of local shops and facilities to support the local economy; and
  - Better places for everyone (as detailed as one of four important outcomes highlighted for the Mayor's Vision for Cycling)

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[12] The significance of 2022 relates to the four-year election cycle, the will mean that the target will be due to be met within the four-year term of the councillors elected at the next council elections in 2018. If the target date remains at 2025, there will be two interim council elections (2018 and 2022) before the milestone date. As an indicator of the significance of this, only 10 of the 54 councillors elected in Sutton in May 2006 remain as representatives of their community nine years later in September 2015. Consequently, it would be reasonable to expect that the majority of Sutton's councillors serving in 2015 will not be representing the borough in 2025.

[13] Assen and Groningen Cycling Study Tours, facilitated by David Hembrow, are highly recommended.

- We would like the Strategy to provide clear detail of how it will be used at Local Area Committee meetings, particularly in respect of transport and planning related decisions, and contentious issues including parking.

- We would like a commitment to the production of quarterly updates to complement the 'live' nature of the Strategy. These updates would need to be transparent, recognise the challenges and ongoing contentious issues, detail the lows as well as the highs on progress, explain the reasoning behind decisions that were or were not being made.

- To give the Strategy immediate relevance, we would like the final version to include supportive quotes from a number of councillors across all political parties. These could include those who have shown support for Space for Cycling in their wards, and it would be helpful to have input from Ruth Dombey, Leader of the Council, too.

- We would like to see the Strategy clearly state that all councillors will work together with the residents in their wards on a united front.

- At the moment in Sutton we seem to be planning facilities with the expectation that the current low levels of cycling will continue. In the future, cycling needs to be treated as a grown-up form of transport and worthy of delivering the best schemes. We would like this reflected in the Strategy.

- The final Strategy needs to be fully promoted. This is an absolutely fundamental requirement. We recommend that the Council ensures that every resident knows about it, everyone who drives through Hackbridge, cycles the Wandle Trail, scoots to school, takes the bus, walks to our local centres, or thinks it is acceptable to park their private vehicle in areas demarcated for loading only on Woodcote Road in Wallington, know about it.

- A step-change in the approach taken by the Council to deliver on cycling is a key requirement. The Strategy needs to indicate that bold decisions will be made, set out how improvements for cycling can benefit society as a whole, and give some indication of what its legacy will be in twenty years time.

- There needs to be recognition in the Strategy that a major barrier to wider participation in cycling is lack of infrastructure.

- A full audit of the current "network" needs to be identified in the Strategy as a short term, as well as medium term objective.

- The Strategy needs to provide a guarantee to undertake regular checks of existing cycling infrastructure, including the sweeping of paths, repairs to signage, and an undertaking to maintain and repair path surfaces and to report that this had been carried out.

- We would recommend a commitment in the Strategy for the Council to commission a professionally produced video to illustrate what cycling as transport could actually mean to residents of the borough. A dedicate website would be useful. These interventions could be funded through the LIP process.

- We would recommend a commitment in the Strategy for the Council to allocate a proportion of the LIP funding allocation for the coming year towards staff training on the London Cycling Design Standards, Network Analysis, and Cycling Level of Service assessments, as a priority over the production of many of the currently proposed cycle schemes that will have little impact on cycling levels.

- If the Council genuinely wants to encourage cycling and walking, this of necessity implies some discouragement of driving. We recommend that the Strategy acknowledges this and outlines suitable approaches[14].

- The ongoing major schools expansion project continues to provide a source of funding for local transport improvements, and these have generally focused on the immediate environment around the school. It would be useful to include one or more case studies in the final Strategy, highlighting what has been achieved.

- Where funding is available for the expansion of a school that is located on a residential street, e.g. Dorchester Primary, Worcester Park, we would like to see a commitment in the Strategy for an approach towards making all areas outside the school low traffic-volume "cycle streets". For major school developments, situated on busy roads, like that currently proposed for Hackbridge Primary School, London Road (A237), the Strategy could reflect the opportunities that such projects provide for sustainable transport enhancements over a wider area.

- A commitment in the Strategy for Sutton Council to liaise on a regular basis with the councils of Kingston, Waltham Forest and Enfield to learn best practice from these 'mini-Holland' boroughs would be welcome.

Could this be Hackbridge, North Cheam, Stonecot Hill, Rosehill, Wallington or Worcester Park?

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[14] Soft ways of discouraging driving could include a reassessment of parking policy, and a focus on what sort of streets people actually want to live on (i.e. quiet and safe, not noisy, not polluted and not traffic dominated). Closing streets to through traffic is a way of discouraging driving for short trips. Considering that many people would love to live on a cul-de-sac, this idea need not be unpopular. People who live on the few streets already closed to through traffic in the borough could be asked if they would like to see their street opened to traffic again, and how the manage with the closure.

6: SOME FINAL THOUGHTS

In this response we are endeavouring to provide some useful and constructive comments on the Draft Cycling Delivery Strategy. At times we are highly critical, and at times quite pessimistic. It is hoped that the reasons for this censorious and despondent approach are apparent. To put it succinctly, in the past we have been disappointed. When we began our initial discussions on what our response should be, there was a tendency for people to say we have heard it all before, nothing has happened, so why should we expect anything different this time? Someone said it was like "trying to make an omelette, without breaking eggs". And this is where we would like the council to prove us wrong. It has to be different this time. This time there is a real opportunity.

We hope that the Strategy will capture the imagination of all councillors, so that they will see cycling less as a marginalised activity and more as a transport option in its own right. A transport option that can help alleviate congestion, alleviate pressure on parking, improve health and well-being, offer freedom and choice for the young, the old, and those less mobile, as well as improve the look and feel of our local neighbourhoods. The fact that so few people currently feel able to cycle should not be a barrier to ambition or to aspiration. The case needs to be made.

For too long, cycling has been seen as either a sport or leisure activity. Cycling now needs to be seen as a convenient form of transport. Our hope is that the new Strategy will start the process to transform the cycling landscape, so that within a few years people will no longer perceive cycling as something that is too dangerous or too inconvenient, but as a joyful and stress-free way of making some of their local journeys. There is no doubt that training and education will become an even more important part of this, but the bottom line is: people will only do things differently if they feel differently about things.

The draft Sustainable Transport Strategy refers to a road user hierarchy of considering children, elderly people, and those with mobility impairments first, and then other pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport, before considering local motor traffic and non-local motor traffic last. The principles behind the LCC's Space for Cycling initiative will help that process start to happen, however tough and challenging these may currently appear to be. It is time to rise to the challenges.

We are delighted that the Council has appointed Cllr Manuel Abellan as Cycling Champion, and we look forward to working with him, and councillors of all parties, in the coming months to progress the objectives of the final, robust, cycling Strategy. We also look forward to helping the Council work with the residents of Sutton, because there will be challenging conversations to be had.

Our final message has not changed. We have no shortage of evidence that safe and attractive space to cycle is what will attract not only greater numbers, but also a more diverse cross-section of society to embrace everyday cycling. The measures outlined in this Strategy need to be fully promoted, and the case needs to be made. It is not about lycra-clad "cyclists". It is about making some short journeys in a way that should be a convenient, fun, inclusive and stress-free (with the bonus of being healthy, good for the local economy, having little impact on the world's energy sources, and reducing the impact that increasing traffic could have). In essence, when it comes to sustainable transport, cycling has got a great deal to offer. So let's produce the Strategy that Sutton deserves. It's time to make the case and rise to the challenges.

Could this be the future?

Get Sutton Cycling

September 2015