

## Borough news and update from Get Sutton Cycling | March 2017

### Healthier streets, and more pleasant neighbourhoods, are a step closer

Initial plans have been produced that give some detail on the proposals for **Sutton's first Quietway** linking Colliers Wood in Merton with Sutton town centre. **The ability of the Quietway to remove barriers to cycling**, and attract "cyclists who want to use quieter, low-traffic routes" (a principle Transport for London definition of a **Quietway**), **will require the use of good quality, inclusive, design features along the route. Not just lines and signs**, or simply a rebranding of the London Cycle Network. This is not the time to aim low and miss the target. As a precursor to implementation, **full engagement with residents, schools and businesses over a wide neighbourhood area**, set in the context of the council's **Sustainable Transport Strategy** (March 2015), **Cycling Strategy** (November 2015) and related policy issues (including the emerging **Parking Strategy** and the **Health and Wellbeing Strategy** (approved September 2016)) will be required. Consequently, it is reassuring to learn that **there will be an element of neighbourhood engagement in taking the process forward.**



Quietways can be more than just cycle routes. **Quietways provide the opportunity to create safer and more pleasant neighbourhoods for everyone**, by reducing the speed and dominance of motor traffic, improving local air quality, and investing in a better, more accessible, urban realm. **Residents living in streets to the north of Sutton**, towards St Helier Hospital and beyond, **could be the first in the borough to benefit from relatively substantial funding from Transport for London** that will help make this a reality in their area.

Sustrans, as the Delivery Agents appointed by TfL to manage and coordinate the work with the London boroughs of Merton and Sutton, is currently working on concept designs for some sections of the route. Ultimately, however, whether or not TfL agrees to invest in the proposals will depend on the **degree of support and political will given to the project from Sutton Council and ward councillors.**

The importance of this is not to be underestimated, because there is a lot at stake. The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, announced [London's cycling budget to 2021/22](#) in December 2016. As part of this, **all boroughs will be invited to develop proposals to bid for funding Liveable Neighbourhoods in their area in 2017**. And then, last month, the Mayor, and the new Walking and Cycling Commissioner Will Norman, launched [Healthy Streets for London](#). This is a programme, supported by a £2.1bn funding allocation from TfL, which is to focus on **creating more welcoming and inclusive streets to enable more Londoners to walk, cycle and use public transport more often**. Boroughs that can demonstrate they are both **willing and able to deliver** are much more likely to be successful in their bid for funding. Clearly, therefore, Sutton's first Quietway is an opportunity not only to help deliver on Healthy Streets, but also to set the borough's credentials for the being in pole position for the "big money".

## Report It (or not, as the case may be)

In the December 2016 newsletter there was much excitement about the possibility of having a cycling category added to the [Report It](#) facility on the council's website. Unfortunately, there is nothing further to report on this at the moment, apart from the general apathy to the idea received from council officers.

## Local Plan: Sutton 2031 planning for our future

Sutton Council has recently [consulted](#) again on the borough's Draft Local Plan, but this time in relation to legal compliance and soundness. During the early part of 2016 we set out our response to the council's Draft Local Plan consultation and its associated elements, the **Draft Sutton Town Centre Masterplan** and **Draft London Cancer Hub Masterplan** ([Sutton 2031 – planning for our future](#) and [Sutton 2031 – is cycling part of the picture?](#)). The revised Sutton Town Centre Masterplan document, published shortly after the consultation, contained no changes that specifically related to cycling. This was a disappointment. However, it is good to know that the **final Sutton Town Centre Masterplan** (dated June 2016, and available from the council's Planning Policy portal at [Sutton 2031](#)) does include several more references to cycling. A notable change is within the document's Vision Statement, where a sentence now contains three additional words and reads: "Tramlink, along with other enhanced public transport **and cycling infrastructure**, will make the town centre the most accessible place in the borough".

## Lost opportunities, a lack of communication, and an absence of joined-up thinking

[No room for bikes: how Tharp Road could show borough-wide failure over cycling](#) provides an insight into the here and now, and the lost opportunities by council officers to engage with residents on cycling (or the promotion of any of the council's transport, parking or health related policies). There will be more on **the need for better communication** in the second part of [Inspiring Vision and then... the reality](#). Our responses to informal [consultations](#), relating to ideas for cycling at Angel Hill and (yet again) Green Wrythe Lane, will be available soon too, so keep an eye on the website.

## Is there any news on the borough's Cycling Strategy?

It is now fifteen months since members of the Environment and Neighbourhood Committee [approved the Cycling Strategy](#). A report on progress towards achieving the twenty-eight short-term (2015-2017) objectives is awaited.

## Thank you for supporting the London Cycling Campaign

Thank you for supporting the London Cycling Campaign. There are currently around 90 members here in Sutton. Although relatively small in number, we are big on ambition! Please get involved in any way you can to help bring about real change for cycling in our borough. Things are moving in the right direction, but there is still a very long way to go to make our streets feel safe and inviting for cycling (and all the benefits that will bring). We want to keep up the momentum, and ensure that Sutton does not get left behind. All your contributions, thoughts and ideas appreciated. Why not come to our next meeting to find out more, or have a chat? You will find the details on the [Next meet-up page](#) of the website. This month we hope to welcome Fran Graham to Sutton. Fran is the new Campaigns Coordinator at the London Cycling Campaign and author of [5 reasons to love Mini-Hollands](#). So we are really looking forward to meeting Fran, and Fran would love to meet you too!

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