

Sutton Liveable Neighbourhoods - funding bid

Get Sutton Cycling response to the online survey | October 2019

*This response to the [Sutton Liveable Neighbourhoods - funding bid](#) consultation (9 September 2019 to 3 November 2019) has been prepared by Charles Martin on behalf of Get Sutton Cycling. Get Sutton Cycling represents the **London Cycling Campaign** in Sutton.*

Summary of response

Sutton's Liveable Neighbourhoods funding bid, with its focus on Sutton town centre, south east Sutton, and north west Sutton (Figure 1), **is strongly supported**.

Our top three **priorities for local streets**, of the eleven listed options, are:

- **reduced traffic on residential streets;**
- **more welcoming streets for cycling;** and
- **improved cycling routes to Sutton High Street and / or Sutton railway station**

There is strong agreement for fourteen of the fifteen statements regarding the extent to which we would like to see improvements. The exception being the provision of electric car charging points in streets without off-street parking.

Our **two overriding expectations for the bid** are:

- a commitment to develop **high-quality cycling infrastructure around, and through, the core of Sutton town centre, and for this infrastructure to be continuous, joined-up and highly visible**. If proposals for the delivery of such extensive infrastructure cannot be included within the bid, due to the constraints of budget, there would at least be the expectation for the bid to recognise an aspiration to deliver further on this when other funding opportunities arise.
- a commitment to develop **extensive 'low traffic neighbourhood' and filtered permeability proposals, as part of a joined-up network of safe, direct, Cycleways throughout residential areas**.

We would expect **the bid to be able to provide evidence of :**

- **clear political support and early and on-going engagement from the Council Leader, Committee Members and ward councillors.**
- **establishment of early engagement with communities ahead of the bid, and how this engagement will be ongoing during the development of proposals.**

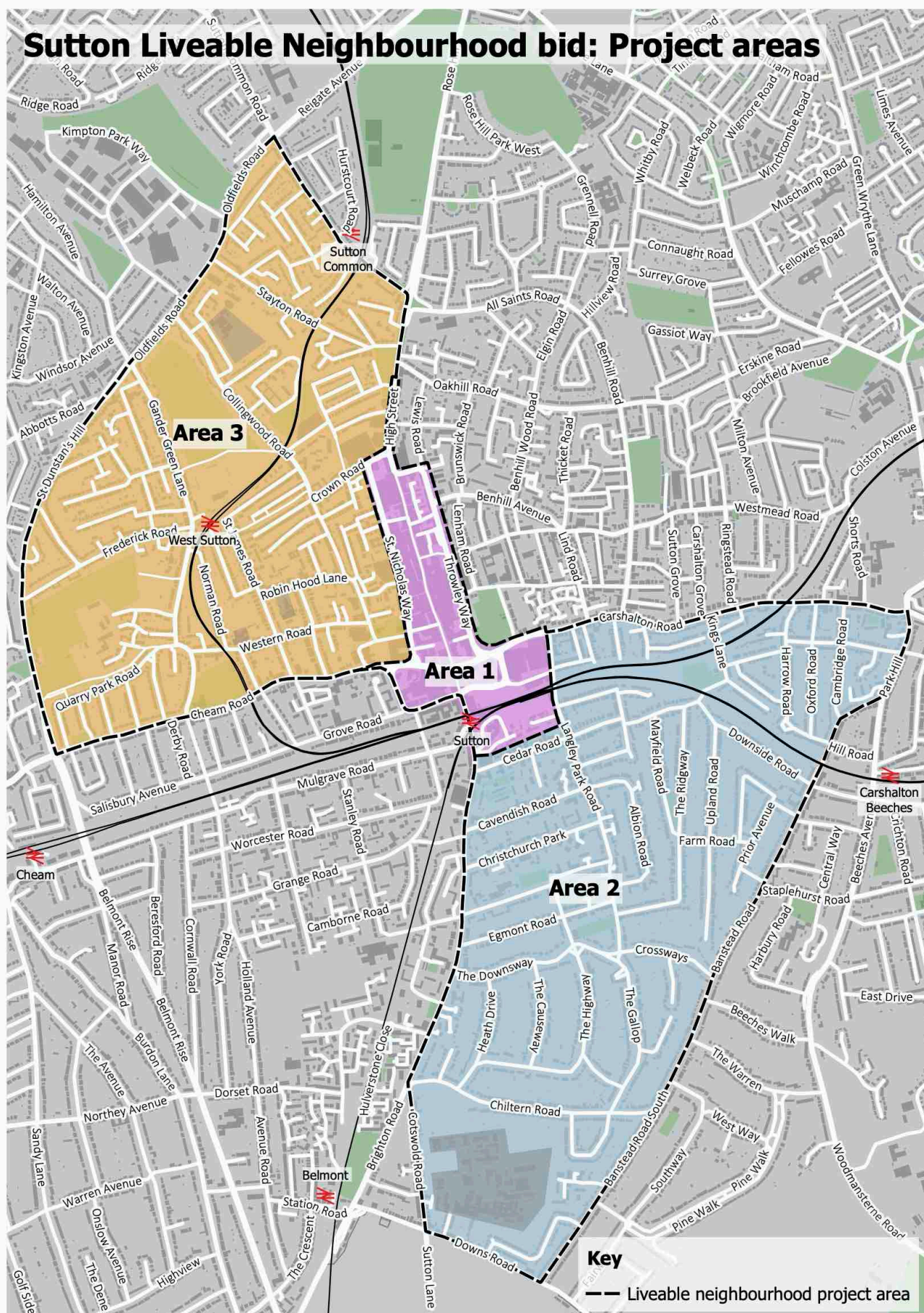


Figure 1: Sutton Liveable Neighbourhood bid - location plan of project areas (Urban Movement | LB of Sutton)
Approximate scale: 4.6 km north-south; 3 km east-west

Full consultation response

1. What is your relationship with the project area(s)?

Not applicable

2. How do you normally travel to Sutton High Street?

Not applicable

3. If you use Sutton Train Station how do you normally travel to it?

Not applicable

4. From the list below, what do you think should be prioritised on your local streets? (please select your top three in ranked order, 1 being your highest priority and 3 being your lowest priority)

- More pedestrian crossings on main roads
- **Reduced through traffic on residential streets 1**
- Slower vehicle speeds on residential streets
- Improved walking routes to Sutton High Street and / or Sutton train station
- **Improved cycling routes to Sutton High Street and ~~for~~ Sutton train station 3**
- Improved air quality
- **More welcoming streets for cycling 2**
- More welcoming streets for walking
- Improved accessibility for those with mobility impairments 3 (personally)
- More trees, plants and greenery
- More places to sit and rest

5. For each of the following statements please state the extent to which you would like to see the following improvements:

Strongly agree with:

- Easier, safer and more pleasant to walk or cycle to Sutton High Street from adjacent residential areas
- Improvements to the side streets off Sutton High Street for those walking, cycling and relaxing in the town centre
- More seating, tree planting and cycle parking in Sutton High Street
- Easier, safer and more pleasant to walk or cycle to Sutton train station
- Improved pedestrian and cycle crossing points on main roads
- Improvements to local shopping parades
- Easier and safer for parents and children to walk, scoot and cycle to and from school
- Temporary closure of streets outside schools at peak hours
- Rat-running restricted on residential streets
- Improved pavement surfacing
- Cycle hangars in residential streets
- Improved bus stop facilities (for example shelters, seating, countdown screens)
- More reliable and shorter bus journey times
- More tree planting and greenery in residential streets

Strongly disagree with:

- Electric car charging points in streets without off-street parking

6. If you have additional comments or suggestions that could be included in the Sutton Liveable Neighbourhoods bid, please enter them below:

Sutton's Liveable Neighbourhoods funding bid, with its focus on three areas (Sutton town centre, south-east Sutton, and north-west Sutton), encompassing part of six wards, **is strongly supported**.

Sutton town centre (Area 1) provides an opportunity to start to reimagine the one-way gyratory, a ring-road that has presented a barrier to walking and cycling, access and egress, ever since its construction in the early 1970s. With the scope of the Liveable Neighbourhoods funding bid encompassing areas beyond the core town centre, extending up to about 2 km towards the south-east (Area 2), and a similar distance to the north-west (Area 3), the opportunity exists to use distinctive local approaches, tailored to the needs of local communities, to deliver positive changes and less traffic-dominated streets to these surrounding residential areas.

We believe that it is important for the bid to be promoted in terms of the overriding aim of the Liveable Neighbourhoods programme, which is **to improve neighbourhoods for walking, cycling and public transport and to reduce car trips**.

It is equally important for the bid to be seen to have **full support from from the Council Leader, Committee Members and ward councillors**, and that **early engagement with residents** has been established to outline the aims and benefits and so pave the way for positive on-going involvement. The bid will need to provide details of how engagement will be ongoing during the development of the proposals. Ideally, the bid will be able to provide details of established aspirations held by the Council through an assessment of outcomes to commitments expressed in the borough's Sustainable Transport Strategy¹; Cycling Strategy²; Third Local Implementation Plan³, and minutes of relevant local committee meetings (2017 to present)⁴.

The comments and suggestions that follow are intended to give **a broad overview** of the sort of proposals that that we believe would help deliver on the Liveable Neighbourhood objectives in the three project areas. It is recognised, however, that the provision of high-quality infrastructure, and junction upgrades can be costly. Therefore, **even with the high level of funding available through the Liveable Neighbourhoods programme at this time, it is unlikely that all of our specific ideas** (and it is not be any means a comprehensive list) **could be achieved in this round, and from this funding source, alone**.

Lambeth's Liveable Neighbourhoods bid for Brixton⁵, which was awarded a grant in March 2019 as part of phase two the programme, and which is considered to be one of the most ambitious to date, has been supported by extra funding from the Council. This is something that our borough could do

¹ Sustainable Transport Strategy (LB of Sutton, June 2015) - [pdf](#)

² Cycling Strategy (LB of Sutton, November 2015) - [pdf](#)

³ Third Local Implementation Plan (LB of Sutton, April 2019) - [pdf](#)

⁴ LB of Sutton > Current Committees <https://moderngov.sutton.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?bcr=1>

⁵ Brixton Liveable Neighbourhood bid (LB of Lambeth) <https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/better-fairer-lambeth/project/brixton-liveable-neighbourhood-bid>

too. Additionally, there are potentially other funding opportunities, including the Sutton Link project (Tram or Bus Rapid Transit linking Sutton and Merton)⁶, and the Sutton Town Centre Masterplan 2031⁷ proposals, both of which would have an impact on the built environment and provide further opportunities for active travel. These, though, are a little way in the future, so it is also hoped that additional funding, to enhance the aspirations of the Liveable Neighbourhoods funding bid, can be (or has been) secured through the recent and ongoing development in Sutton town centre⁸.

In recognising that both the Sutton Link project and the Sutton 2031 Masterplan proposals could be major developments in the next ten years or so, careful consideration will need to be given to the proposals for infrastructure as part of the Liveable Neighbourhoods funding bid to ensure that the proposals deliver the biggest impact for the available budget. At the very least, proposals for a well-planned, interconnected network of high-quality cycle routes, providing safe and attractive connections from all of the surrounding town centre neighbourhoods to Sutton High Street, which can subsequently be extended and developed as funding becomes available, would be welcomed.

Area 1 (Sutton town centre)

There is the expectation that Sutton's Liveable Neighbourhoods funding bid will include proposals to address the barrier effect of the gyratory, and in doing so transform the walking and cycling experience in this core area.

To achieve this transformation, and so enable safe and comfortable cycling in all directions, proposals will, ideally, give consideration to the construction of high-quality, joined-up, highly visible cycling infrastructure (separate from the footway) around, and through, the core of Sutton town centre (including the "gyratory" Throwley Way, Carshalton Road, Chalk Pit Way, Sutton Court Road, Grove Road, Sutton Park Road, Cheam Road, St Nicholas Way, Crown Road, Sutton High Street and Marshall's Road). *Note: the links provided with these locations, and other marked locations in the text, point to OpenStreetMap (© OpenStreetMap contributors).*

If the delivery of such extensive infrastructure can not be included within the bid, due to the constraints of budget, there would at least be the expectation for the bid to recognise an aspiration to deliver further on this when other funding opportunities arise.

One option for the gyratory, as outlined in the Draft Sutton Town Centre Masterplan (Sutton 2031: Planning Our Future) consultation⁹, was for part of (or possibly all of) this ring-road to be converted to two-way operation. Whether this is the best option is, of course, debatable. However, one possible advantage of this could be a reduction in traffic cutting through residential streets in an attempt to avoid the gyratory, as currently appears to be the case. There is more on traffic avoiding the gyratory, in the discussion to Area 2 and Area 3 below.

⁶ Have your say on the Sutton Link: a major new public transport service for Sutton and Merton (TfL Consultation Hub): <https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/trams/sutton-link/>

⁷ Sutton 2031 (Opportunity Sutton): <https://www.opportunitysutton.org/sutton-for-investment/sutton-2031/>

⁸ BID Matters Newsletter Edition 2 June 2015 'Open for business' (Successful Sutton): https://issuu.com/successfulsutton/docs/bid_matters_newsletter_edition_2_- (referenced from "Why didn't Sutton bid for a Liveable Neighbourhoods funding at the first opportunity?" (Get Sutton Cycling, January 2018) <https://getsuttoncycling.org.uk/2018/01/07/why-didnt-sutton-submit-a-bid-for-liveable-neighbourhoods-funding-at-the-first-opportunity/>)

⁹ Sutton 2031 Planning Our Future (LB of Sutton) https://sutton.citizenspace.com/chief-executives-group/suttons-local-plan-consultation/consult_view/ and 'Sutton 2031 - planning for our future' (Get Sutton Cycling, April 2016 <https://getsuttoncycling.org.uk/2016/04/15/sutton-2031-part1-2/>)

It is also recognised that there is ongoing work associated with proposals for two Cycleways in the borough, both of which link to Sutton High Street, and that these separately funded projects (likely to be delivered in a shorter time-scale than a successful Liveable Neighbourhoods bid), will provide further opportunities to enhance the cycling experience. These proposed Cycleways need to be delivered to a high standard in Area 1, regardless of whether the Liveable Neighbourhoods funding bid is successful or not.

Priorities for consideration in area 1 include:

- improved access to, and egress from, the town centre by cycle
 - east and west (significant upgrades to the existing routes across St Nicholas Way and Throwley Way between Greenford Road and Benhill Avenue, and between Lodge Place and Manor Lane / Lenham Road, which, in part, may be facilitated by the Cycleway proposals; and between Gibson Road / St Nicholas Road and Hill Road / Throwley Road)
 - north and the south (where the trafficked sections of Sutton High Street (by Marshall's Road in the north, and by Grove Road and Sutton Court Road in the south) do not interface well with the non-trafficked core section of the High Street)
 - the south-east (neighbourhoods located to the east of the Sutton to Belmont railway line (area 2), where the busy Brighton Road acts as a barrier and the surrounding roads appear to carry a high-level of through traffic)
 - the south-west (neighbourhoods south of Cheam Road, and west of Brighton Road, where Cheam Road and the gyratory section of Grove Road and Sutton Park Road form barriers)
- improved access to, and egress from, Sutton Station (north end of Brighton Road, and southern end of Sutton High Street)

Area 2 (south east Sutton)

For this leafy, largely residential, area, which extends eastwards from Sutton town centre towards Carshalton and southwards towards Belmont and the site occupied by the continuing development of the London Cancer Hub¹⁰, there is the expectation that the bid will include proposals to develop:

- **'low traffic neighbourhoods'**, and **filtered permeability options**, throughout (similar to Lambeth's successful bid for Brixton and Waltham Forest's mini-Holland¹¹). Such proposals may be helped through an assessment of the proportion of all traffic using these roads and avenues that is non-local. The creation of 'pocket parks' would be welcomed.
- a **network of safe, direct, joined-up Cycleways** within, and between, low-traffic neighbourhoods
- **'Gateways'** to facilitate safe crossing of, and access to and egress from, the roads around the periphery of the area.

¹⁰ London Cancer Hub: <https://www.londoncancerhub.org/land-deal-completes-multimillion-pound-investment-make-london-cancer-hub-reality/>

¹¹ Enjoy Waltham Forest: <https://www.enjoywalthamforest.co.uk/about-mini-holland/>

- options for the future provision of **segregated cycle facilities** on roads where traffic levels are high and point closures are not appropriate (both within the area, and on periphery roads)

It is recognised that several Healthy Streets schemes are envisaged for this area¹². In delivering these LIP funded schemes, the opportunity needs to be taken to promote ideas that could align with projects developed through a successful Liveable Neighbourhoods bid.

Issues for Area 2 include:

- the limited number of north-south crossing points over the east-west railway lines in the north of the area (including Langley Park Road, King's Lane)
- the busy roads around the periphery of the area (including Carshalton Road (A232); Brighton Road)
- inappropriate levels of motor traffic on many residential streets, in part caused by drivers seeking to avoid the central Sutton gyratory system and traffic signals (including, but not limited to, Cedar Road, Cavendish Road, Langley Park Road, The Downsway, Chiltern Road, King's Lane);
- the expectation of increased traffic movements associated with the new secondary school (Sutton Harris Academy) at Chiltern Road, and the development of the London Cancer Hub on the former Sutton Hospitals site immediately to the south.

Possible options for Area 2 could include:

- Consideration of opportunities for significantly reducing traffic on the roads that traverse the two railway lines, running east-west, in the north of area. For example:
 - King's Lane - the introduction of a trial point closure at the railway bridge (by Hillcroome Road and Upland Road).
 - Langley Park Road - the introduction of trail point closures, and/or banned right turn from Langley Park Road into Carshalton Road (A232).
- Introduction of a trial 'School Street' scheme, to limit motor vehicles access at times when children are arriving and leaving, at Devonshire Avenue (Devonshire Primary School; Eagle House). Ideally, this would be further developed to either include a permanent filter, or a redesigned street profile, to provide two-way for cycling at all times, and the provision of a 'Gateway' through the construction of early-start cycle crossing at Brighton Road (Devonshire Avenue/Ventnor Road), and a point closure at the railway bridge on Stanley Road/Ventnor Road near Overton Grange School).
- Consideration of options to facilitate more journeys to the London Cancer Hub, once complete, which has an aim to see 10% of journeys, made by an estimated 11,380 staff, to be made by bike¹³.
- Development of proposals to reduce the barrier effect of the roads around the periphery of the area (Brighton Road, Carshalton Road (A232), Banstead Road and Banstead Road South).

¹² "Healthy Streets' for Sutton year two (2020-2021)" (Get Sutton Cycling, October 2019)

¹³ London Cancer Hub, Development Framework: Concept Design Consultation Draft (Haptic, Nordic, JLL, WSP, February 2016), referenced from <https://getsuttoncycling.org.uk/2016/04/23/sutton-2031-part2/> (Get Sutton Cycling, April 2016)

- A review of the 2014 Space for Cycling ward 'asks'¹⁴, for Belmont ward, which included protected space for cycling between Belmont and Sutton town centre.

Area 3 (north west Sutton)

For this mixed residential area, which extends westwards from Sutton town centre towards Cheam and northwards towards Sutton Common, and bounded by the Sutton by-pass (A217) in the west and Cheam Road A232) in the south, there is the expectation that the bid will include proposals to develop:

- **'low traffic neighbourhoods'**, and **filtered permeability options**, throughout. Such proposals may be helped through an assessment of the proportion of all traffic using these roads, streets and lanes that is non-local. The creation of 'pocket parks' would be welcomed, along with the provision of cycle storage solutions.
- a **network of safe, direct, joined-up Cycleways** within, and between, low-traffic neighbourhoods
- **'Gateways'** to facilitate safe crossing of, and access to and egress from, the roads around the periphery of the area.
- options for the future provision of **segregated cycle facilities** on roads where traffic levels are high and point closures are not appropriate (both within the area, and on periphery roads)

It is recognised that there is ongoing work associated with an east-west Cycleway in this area, and that this separately funded project (likely to be delivered in a shorter time-scale than a successful Liveable Neighbourhoods bid) will provide further opportunities to enhance the cycling experience. The proposed east-west Cycleway will need to be delivered to a high standard in Area 3, regardless of whether the Liveable Neighbourhoods funding bid is successful or not. Interventions for this Cycleway are likely to include major upgrades at the St Nicholas Way/Greenford Road and Sunningdale Road/Oldfields Road/Abbotts Road crossings, and new junction designs at Bushey Road/Collingwood Road/Collingwood Recreation Ground and Collingwood Recreation Ground/Gander Green Lane/Elmbrook Road). Additionally, several Healthy Streets LIP funded schemes, are envisaged for the area¹⁵ (some of which are revisiting locations that have been worked on in previous years, for example Collingwood Road, suggesting that piecemeal, timid, approaches can be just short-term solutions). These LIP schemes provide the opportunity to discuss, and have the conversation around, the introduction of low traffic neighbourhoods.

Issues in Area 3 include:

- the absence of any quiet routes for cycling north-south through the area (Gander Green Lane and Collingwood Road are both heavily trafficked);
- the barrier effect caused by roads on the periphery of the area (Cheam Road (A232) to the south of the area; St Dunstan's Hill and Oldfields Road (A217) to the west; Sutton Common Road to the north).
- inappropriate levels of motor traffic on many residential streets (including, but not limited to, Stayton Road, Collingwood Road, Bushey Road, Robin Hood Lane, St James Road, Western Road

¹⁴ 'Space for Cycling: action points for Sutton' (Get Sutton Cycling, May 2014)

¹⁵ 'Healthy Streets' for Sutton year two (2020-2021)' (Get Sutton Cycling, October 2019)

and Tate Road), some of which is believed to be caused, in part, by drivers seeking to avoid the central Sutton gyratory system and associated traffic signals.

Considerations for Area 3 could include:

- The introduction of trial 'School Streets' schemes to limit motor vehicles access at times when children are arriving and leaving. For example, Western Road (Homefield Preparatory School); Robin Hood Lane (Robin Hood Infants' School); Thorncroft Road (Robin Hood Junior School).
- Exploration of 'low traffic neighbourhood' ideas throughout the area, with the aim of removing through traffic (Bushey Road, Collingwood Road, Robin Hood Lane and St James Road; Frederick Road and Alberta Avenue)
- Development of proposals to reduce the barrier effect of the roads around the periphery of the area (St Dunstan's Hill (A217), Oldfields Road (A217), Cheam Road (A232))
- A review of the Space for Cycling ward 'asks'¹⁶, for Sutton West and Sutton North wards, which included providing quieter routes for cycling by discouraging through traffic on residential roads and upgrading the 1930s cycle path on Sutton by-pass (A217) to Dutch standards. It is recognised that the latter proposal would require a considerable level of additional funding, and that it is likely that this is beyond the remit of the Liveable Neighbourhoods funding bid. Nevertheless, the aspiration to see improvements to the cycling infrastructure on this TfL road received the support of councillors in 2014¹⁷.

Across the three project areas

In theory, even those locations within Area 2 and Area 3 that are situated at the furthest geographical point from Sutton town centre, (e.g. the Sutton Life Centre, SM3 9PX; or the Royal Marsden, SM2 5PT) are within a ten to fifteen-minute cycle ride of Sutton High Street, SM1 1JF. Understandably, though, even a ten to fifteen-minute cycle ride is not an attractive proposition for many people given the current conditions on the roads. This is reflected in the fact that cycling continues to account for only a tiny fraction of trips made by residents in our borough (around 1.3 per cent average 2015/16 to 2017/18)¹⁸, effectively unchanged for over twenty-eight years¹⁹. Clearly, traditional traffic calming engineering ideas, and the welcomed Bikeability cycle training programme, as funded through the Local Implementation Plan for nearly two decades, have failed to deliver modal shift. Liveable Neighbourhoods funding, and the Healthy Streets Approach, provides the opportunity to change that. However, this will only happen if all proposals for the three project areas create environments where walking, cycling and public transport becomes the primary choice for getting around.

One measurement of success for completed schemes in these neighbourhoods, would be an indicator showing a significant increase in cycling here, coupled with a reduction in short car trips and long term behaviour change. Consequentially, it is anticipated that these metrics, along with

¹⁶ 'Space for Cycling: action points for Sutton' (Get Sutton Cycling, May 2014)

¹⁷ 'Sutton Local Committee agree that cycling proposals be presented to TfL' (Get Sutton Cycling, November 2014)

¹⁸ 'Update of Sustainable Transport Strategy' (for 2019, as yet unpublished), 'Appendix C: Summary of Sustainable Transport Strategy Targets': T1.1 Cycling mode share 1.3% (2015/16 to 2017/18)

¹⁹ 'Sustainable Transport Strategy' (LB Sutton, March 1999): Modal Split (main mode) for journeys by Sutton residents 1991 (Source: London Area Transport Survey 1991) Cycle 2%

early traffic counts to determine the proportion of traffic that comes from outside the specific neighbourhood areas, will be monitored as part of the programme.

Our prioritisation for local streets

In terms of the listed **suggestions for prioritisation on the streets in the project areas (reflecting Q4 in the online survey)**, all eleven of the elements outlined for priority in the survey are strongly supported. In many ways, all of the suggestions are interlinked. For example, the provision of 'More trees, plants and greenery', along with 'More places to sit and rest', 'More pedestrian crossings on main roads', and 'Slower vehicle speeds on residential streets', will all help to make 'More welcoming streets for walking'. Similarly, 'More welcoming streets for cycling' can be delivered through 'Reduced through traffic on residential streets' which will also deliver on 'Improved air quality'. Meanwhile, the provision of 'Improved accessibility for those with mobility impairments' will help considerably with both walking and cycling.

The top three priorities for us, as an active travel advocacy group, are (1) **'Reduced through traffic on residential streets'**; (2) **'More welcoming streets for cycling'**; (3) **'Improved cycling routes to Sutton High Street and / or Sutton train station'** - noting that in the latter case, the priority would be for improved cycling routes to both Sutton High Street and to Sutton railway station, rather than to one or the other. Sutton station is, after all, situated at the southern end of Sutton High Street, and is also adjacent to Area 2 project area (south east Sutton).

The extent to which we agree with suggested improvements

In terms of the extent to which we agree with **suggested improvements (reflecting Q5 in the online survey)**, we 'strongly agree' with fourteen of the fifteen stated ideas. The exception relates to the provision of 'Electric car charging points in streets without off-street parking'.

The reason for not agreeing with the provision of electric charging points is because the Liveable Neighbourhoods programme is about supporting the aims of the Mayor's Transport Strategy, which include reducing car dependency and car ownership, and increasing active and sustainable travel, by making walking, cycling and public transport the primary choice for getting around. Therefore, we feel it is not appropriate to fund the provision of electric car charging points, whether in streets with or without off-street parking, from the Liveable Neighbourhoods funding stream. It is recognised that the decarbonisation of transport through the switch to Electric Vehicles is happening and that, therefore, charging infrastructure will be required. However, recovering the cost of installing and maintaining this infrastructure, whether owned by the local authority, the network provider, or private entities, is arguably outside the remit of this programme. Furthermore, not everyone believes mass ownership of electric vehicles is the solution to sustainable transport (especially so in the urban and suburban context).

Thank you for providing the us with opportunity to provide feedback and ideas to improve travel options, and access, to Sutton town centre and surrounding neighbourhoods. A successful Liveable Neighbourhoods funding bid will enable Sutton Council to invest in the Borough's streets and spaces, promote active travel choices, and deliver the improvements that local people would like to see. Improvements that have the potential to reduce road danger, provide community ownership of streets, and create better places.

We hope our comments and suggestions help inform the development of the funding bid, and wish those involved in taking the bid forward every success.