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[@cyclinginsutton](https://twitter.com/cyclinginsutton)



sutton@lcc.org.uk

Borough news and update from Get Sutton Cycling | March 2020

Stay at home to Protect the NHS and Save Lives

Such a headline would never have been expected for this, or any other, quarterly briefing on cycling in Sutton just a few short weeks ago. Stay at home to protect the NHS and save lives. It is, though, the message we need to heed as the UK responds to the coronavirus COVID-19 outbreak. **Stay safe, keep well**, as we [ride out this national emergency together](#).



Sutton to St Helier proposed Cycleway: phase 1 (St Helier area) is progressing

Following on from the [feedback](#) (some good, some not so good) kindly provided by council officers in December, relating to the consultation to the St Helier section (phase 1) of Sutton's first proposed Cycleway, officers wrote again in February to report that Transport for London had agreed to fund [a link from the Cycleway to St Helier Hospital](#).

LATEST UPDATE: Construction of the hospital link (a "4.5-metre wide segregated pedestrian / cycle track", around 350 metres in length, created by widening the footway by 1.6 metres) is programmed to be completed by July 2020. The current situation means this is now uncertain. In terms of future-proofing, no reassurance has been given that a bidirectional track on the east side of Wrythe Lane is the best infrastructure option for the link, or any subsequent extension. Construction of the parallel crossing at Wrythe Lane, and the signalised crossing at Bishopsford Road, commenced in [early March](#). A 20mph speed limit was introduced in the Stavordale Road area from 16 March. Although council officers had indicated that a traffic count would be carried out on Robertsbridge Road prior to the introduction of 20mph, this count appears not to have been implemented.

Sutton to St Helier proposed Cycleway: phase 2 (Sutton area) future uncertain

An informal consultation on the Sutton section of the Cycleway (phase 2) took place between 25 February and 23 March. This was largely presented as a consultation on proposals for a 20mph speed limit in the area, although respondents were able to suggest ideas for reducing non local through-traffic. Read more in ['Cycleway between Sutton High Street and Colliers Wood – proposals in the Sutton area' informal consultation launched](#).

LATEST UPDATE: Analysis of the consultation responses has begun. Early indications show a low response rate of around 2%. Overall support for the 20mph speed limit but with less enthusiasm for measures to reduce traffic. Given that the total volume of two-way motorised traffic on sections of Grennell Road and Benhill Wood Road, at certain times of day, exceed the [quality criteria](#) for Cycleway provision, it is clear that without traffic reduction the Cycleway here will not be funded. Ultimately, whether Sutton's first proposed Cycleway is delivered will depend on the commitment of ward councillors.

There is more on the Cycleways in the updates to the notes of the [Sutton Cycle Forum December 2019](#).

Liveable Neighbourhoods announcement deferred

Quite understandably, given the COVID-19 crisis, an announcement declaring the winners of third-round [Liveable Neighbourhoods](#) bids has not been made. An official statement to this effect, however, was not provided by TfL, and it is not known why winning bids were not revealed in February 2020, [as had originally been expected](#).

Eighteen local authorities are now known to have submitted a bid for the third-round of Liveable Neighbourhoods funding, although there may be fewer bids than this in total as it is believed that some authorities submitted a combined bid. Sutton is bidding for the first time, as are Barking and Dagenham, and Bexley. Only two boroughs, Kensington and Chelsea and our near neighbours Merton, have yet to make a submission since the programme commenced in 2017.

Welcome to new Carshalton and Wallington MP, Elliot Colburn

Get Sutton Cycling campaigners were delighted to attend a [first meeting with Elliot Colburn, MP](#) for Carshalton and Wallington, in February, following his election to the constituency on 12 December 2019.

Elliott asked about Sutton's vision for cycling, and the borough's first [Liveable Neighbourhoods bid](#). Elliott said he would like Carshalton and Wallington to be greener, and he thought that the promotion of active travel was worthy of cross-party support. Elliott did not rule out the possibility of arranging an event, similar to the borough's first [Cycle Summit](#) organised by his predecessor Tom Brake in 2014.

Elliott continues as a ward councillor for Cheam, a portion he has held since [May 2018](#).

Climate campaign for the elections in May 2021 and May 2022

On 13 March, the Prime Minister announced that local and mayoral elections in England, planned for 7 May 2020, would be postponed for a year, due to the impracticality of holding these at a time when the peak of the spread of the coronavirus is expected. All quite understandable. However, given that **"climate change represents an urgent and potentially irreversible threat to human societies and the planet"** ([Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Special Report: Global Warming at 1.5°C, October 2018](#)), it is good to see that the London Cycling Campaign went ahead and launched its Mayoral election campaign report '[Climate Safe Streets](#)' report this month as planned. Clearly, and despite the need to focus at the moment on the coronavirus pandemic, conversations on options for mitigating climate change remains timely.

[Sutton Council declared a Climate Change Emergency](#) on 23 September 2019. The next few years will determine London's response, across thirty-three local authorities, to this emergency. The 'Climate Safe Streets' report sets out a road map for **decarbonising the capital's roads over the next ten years**. Political will, at both the mayoral and local authority level, is essential to achieve this. It is a big 'ask', but LCC activists, members and supporters will be pressing politicians ahead of the May 2021 Mayoral elections, and then again at the 2022 Local Council elections, to commit to Zero Carbon Roads by 2030.



Changes to Cycle Forum expected

The format of the [Sutton Cycle Forum](#) meetings, hosted by the council on a quarterly basis, is to be reviewed. Meetings in future may be more flexible, and scheduled to be tailored to events such as the timing of the LIP proposals going to local committee in the late spring, or consultations around Cycleway or Liveable Neighbourhoods. On-site visits may also become more frequent.

The scheduled Cycle Forum meeting for 25 March was cancelled for obvious reasons. Given that it could be quite a while before the next face-to-face Cycle Forum meeting is convened, it is hoped to update the extensive article to the most recent meeting [Sutton Cycle Forum December 2019](#) with news on schemes as they become available.

Proposals for Foresters Drive fail to impress

An [informal consultation relating to traffic safety measures on Foresters Drive](#) was launched by Sutton Council on 17 February. [Our response](#), submitted on 9 March, was basically that it was difficult to see how the outlined schemes would make cycling a more attractive proposition in the neighbourhood. Time will tell. Phase two of the project is awaited.

Monthly reviews now on website

A good place to read about news on cycling schemes, and cycling issues in general across the borough (including the [NCN Wandle Trail barriers](#), and the [Carshalton Station Approach Road cycle contraflow](#) - topics that appear to generate a lot of interest), is in our new [month-in-review](#) blog posts.