

# **Cycling, cars and congestion in Sutton and beyond**

## **Ten things you need to know**

1. Traffic in Sutton is rising at an annual rate of nearly 3 per cent, equivalent to a doubling every 25 years.
2. Nearly all traffic growth is on minor roads: up by 6 per cent per annum, ie a doubling every 12 years. These roads are usually residential streets never designed for, and unfit for the purpose of, carrying large numbers of vehicles.
3. Increasing numbers of vehicles registered to Sutton addresses, a growing number of driving licence holders with SM postcodes and projected rises in Sutton's population all point towards continued growth of traffic on Sutton's roads.
4. 6 out of 10 car journeys are under five miles with a substantial proportion less than two miles. Very many of these could easily be cycled (or walked) instead.
5. There is huge potential for more people in Sutton to travel by bike, whether for commuting, shopping, to school or leisure purposes. Currently, just 5 per cent of residents cycle at least three times per week, somewhat less than in Greater London as a whole.

***Unless urgent action is taken, there is the prospect of more congestion and widespread gridlock. More people cycling can play a key role in averting this.***

6. The number of road casualties on Sutton's roads was 378 in 2020, the equivalent of one person being killed, seriously or slightly injured every day. One in ten casualties were pedal cyclists.
7. Car availability is very heavily skewed against lower-income households. Those in the bottom fifth are three times as likely not to have a car (or van) than those in the top fifth. Likewise, those from ethnic minorities are much less likely to have a car (or van) than their white counterparts.
8. Around two-fifths of those eligible for a driving licence in the borough do not have a car (or van). The proportions are far higher in some parts of the borough than others.

9. The effects of congestion range from more air pollution and accelerating climate change - because of low speeds and idling engines - to the huge economic costs which businesses often have little choice but to pass on to consumers. It is estimated that drivers spend nearly three hours each week in Greater London's traffic jams at a cost of £4.9 billion per annum: an average of more than £10 per week for each of the capital's men, women and children.
10. Active travel brings enormous physical and mental health benefits to individuals **and** significantly reduces pressure on the NHS. Regular physical activity such as cycling reduces the risks of:
  - Dementia by up to 30%
  - Hip fractures by up to 68%
  - Depression by up to 30%
  - Breast cancer by 20%
  - Colon cancer by 30%
  - Type 2 cancer by up to 40%
  - Cardiovascular disease by up to 35%
  - ALL-CAUSE MORTALITY by 30%

### ***References:***

1. Figure based on traffic growth between 2009 and 2020, prior to Covid-19: [Road traffic statistics - Local authority: Sutton \(dft.gov.uk\)](https://www.dft.gov.uk/road-traffic-statistics/local-authority-sutton)
2. Figure based on traffic growth between 2009 and 2020, prior to Covid-19 and [Road traffic statistics - London region \(dft.gov.uk\)](https://www.dft.gov.uk/road-traffic-statistics/london-region)
3. [Vehicle licensing statistics: 2019 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/vehicle-licensing-statistics-2019) table veh0105, [Population projections for local authorities: Table 2 - Office for National Statistics](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/population-projections-for-local-authorities-table-2) and [GB Driving Licence Data - data.gov.uk](https://data.gov.uk/dataset/gb-driving-licence-data)
4. [National Travel Survey: 2020 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-travel-survey-2020)
5. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/walking-and-cycling-statistics-cw> table CW0302

6. [Casualties involved in reported road accidents \(RAS30\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) table RAS30038. NB the figures relate to those reported to the police only.
  7. [Travel by vehicle availability, income, ethnic group, household type, mobility status and NS-SEC - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) tables NTS0703 and NTS0707
  8. [Local Area Report for areas in England and Wales - Nomis \(nomisweb.co.uk\)](#)
  9. [Traffic jams cost the UK £6.9bn last year | Auto Express](#) and [Estimates of the population for the UK, England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)
  10. [Cycling and walking plan for England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
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## Statistical sources

A wide range of statistics are available relating to cycling, traffic and travel, with many providing detailed commentary to accompany the figures, including:

- A very useful source, giving answers to many common queries about cycling: [Cycling UK's Cycling Statistics | Cycling UK](#)
- Vehicle miles travelled by vehicle type, road category and region: [Road traffic statistics - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- Department for Transport's National Travel Survey monitoring trends in personal travel: [National Travel Survey - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- Data and statistics about road congestion and travel times on the Strategic Road Network and local 'A' roads: [Road congestion and travel time - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- Transport use by mode during the Covid-19 pandemic: [Transport use during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- Annual reports providing statistics and detailed commentary about trends and developments in travel and transport in Greater London: [Travel in London reports - Transport for London \(tfl.gov.uk\)](#)
- Road casualty statistics at local authority/constituency/police force level by severity and type of road user for each year from 2000: [Road traffic statistics - About \(dft.gov.uk\)](#)

- A free interactive mapping tool providing information about the type and severity of casualties and vehicles involved by location for over 20 years: [CrashMap](#)
- Statistics and factsheets about road safety in Greater London: [Road danger reduction dashboard and data - Transport for London \(tfl.gov.uk\)](#)
- Santander Bike Hire scheme statistics including daily number of bikes hired: [Number of Bicycle Hires - London Datastore](#)
- Daily figures on traffic by mode, including cycling, during the Covid pandemic: [Transport use during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic and developing faster indicators of transport activity - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- Travel times from where people live to 8 local key services by four modes of transport at national, local authority and small Census area levels: [Journey time statistics, England: 2019 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

\*\*\*\*\* *Last updated 23 December 2021* \*\*\*\*\*