

# **Sutton Sustainable Transport Strategy 2021 (STS)**

## **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

### **What is a Sustainable Transport Strategy (STS)?**

The Sustainable Transport Strategy (STS) sets out Sutton's position on a range of transport-related issues, and helps update the borough's Local Plan and local transport policy. It provides direction on transport priorities in the borough and how these are provided, including what will be required to support new development. It also sets out our position on public transport needs and issues across the borough. The STS will also have the status of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which means it will be considered when deciding on planning applications.

### **Why do we need a Sustainable Transport Strategy?**

The economic and environmental challenges facing Sutton, and London as a whole, require significant changes to the way people live and carry out their lives. Pre-COVID, traffic growth was projected to increase by 23% across London by 2041 (source: Mayor's Transport Strategy), and while we cannot accurately predict the impact of COVID on future traffic levels, the reduction in capacity on public transport in the short term risks significant increases in car trips once more. In Sutton the proportion of older people is also increasing, bringing with it a greater demand for measures to support travel in later life. Without [taking] action, traffic volumes are likely to grow, seriously impacting local economic success, as well as London as a whole.

As a result of these factors:

- traffic congestion will continue to damage the local economy, with congestion and delays and pressure on parking;
- air pollution will get worse, potentially causing thousands of premature deaths;
- overcrowding on public transport will continue to worsen unless addressed by significant further investment; and
- obesity levels and diabetes, both of which are worsened by lack of exercise or children being unable to walk or cycle to school because of safety concerns, will continue to increase.

In our Local Implementation Plan<sup>1</sup> we highlighted that vehicle mileage in the borough has remained broadly consistent for a number of years, and cars make up nearly 80% of the total traffic. However, despite this, the number of vehicles registered in the borough has continued to increase, which is already adding to pressure on parking, as well as congestion.

There is a lot that has to be done to ensure that London and Sutton continue to function, have a viable economy and healthy population, and are places where residents and businesses can flourish and co-exist in harmony. One of the ways we can improve the local environment is to reduce our reliance on private car trips and to support sustainable forms of

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.sutton.gov.uk/info/200583/travel\\_and\\_transport/1540/transport\\_plans](https://www.sutton.gov.uk/info/200583/travel_and_transport/1540/transport_plans)

transport, including walking and cycling. This STS will show how Sutton proposes to address these issues and work towards a more sustainable future.

### **What does this strategy mean for residents?**

The Sustainable Transport Strategy (STS) establishes a pathway for enhancing the quality of life of the borough's residents of all ages, but especially children, families, older people and other people who are vulnerable, by:

- Increasing the safety of our roads and streetspace.
- Improving the health of residents by making it easier to walk and cycle, including our access to green spaces in the borough, such as parks and the Wandle Trail.
- Contributing to key aspects of our latest Environment Strategy and Climate Emergency Response Plan, in particular improving air quality.
- Improving the accessibility of public transport for people with disabilities, and offering enhanced age- and dementia-friendly travel options.
- Setting out clearly in one place our expectations of developers in terms of their role in bringing sustainable transport benefits to the borough's residents.

### **Does this mean more Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) across the borough?**

No. Low Traffic Neighbourhoods are just one of many potential sustainable transport measures that could be used in the future, such as junction improvements, better plans for construction, delivery and servicing facilities, School Streets, public realm enhancements, better bus/rail interchange facilities and improved safety and accessibility.

### **What say do Sutton residents/stakeholders have over the locations of schemes?**

A number of schemes are already in progress, including pan-London schemes, such as the Cycleway Network, and those which have already been approved through one of Sutton's six Local Committees<sup>2</sup>. Individual schemes will continue to be consulted on, but the Sustainable Transport Strategy and its delivery plan will make it simpler for these to be considered and prioritised according to local needs and funding availability.

As funding becomes available for other measures, the Council will work with local stakeholders to identify schemes, ranging from junction and safety improvements to larger area-wide interventions, such as 20mph zones or 'low traffic zones', where bus, walking and cycling are prioritised. Residents, businesses and other local community stakeholders, including the emergency services, would all be consulted about schemes of this type. upon with.

### **Are you monitoring data in areas where you envisage schemes being introduced or changes being made?**

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[https://www.sutton.gov.uk/info/200644/councillors\\_the\\_mayor\\_mps\\_meps\\_and\\_committees/1172/local\\_committees](https://www.sutton.gov.uk/info/200644/councillors_the_mayor_mps_meps_and_committees/1172/local_committees)

The Council monitors data across a wide range of local issues, from air quality and congestion to child poverty, public health, flooding, education and deprivation. The Sustainable Transport Strategy does not identify/propose exact scheme locations at this time, but where particular challenges arise in more local areas, we will commission much more detailed local surveys to identify what, if any, sustainable transport measures might help.

**I can't use a bike for work because I carry tools / am physically unable to ride a bike. I can't make use of these schemes. Why are you putting them in?**

We know that not everyone will be able to walk or cycle to work or to go shopping for example. But the Sustainable Transport Strategy shows the potential for both walking and cycling short distances in Sutton to be the highest in London. according to Transport for London's most recent London Travel Demand Survey, 59% of all car journeys originating in Sutton are under 3km (1.86 miles), the third highest in London, and 44% of all car journeys are under 2km (1.24 miles), the fifth highest in London. We urgently need to create conditions where walking, cycling and public transport can become more attractive options.

Anyone who can make the switch to a different mode of transport is helping to address some of the biggest issues facing our communities and freeing up space for those who must still travel by car. Creating more opportunities for residents to travel sustainably will benefit the local environment, allow buses to run on time, enable emergency vehicles to respond more quickly, ensure people with disabilities can travel more effectively in their day-to-day lives and enable deliveries to be made more promptly. For those journeys that must be completed by car, more environmentally-friendly options such as car clubs or electric vehicles will also be developed.

**Is this about being anti-car?**

This is not about being anti-car. This is about giving people real choice by providing attractive and practical alternatives to the private car. This is about becoming a cleaner, safer and more environmentally-friendly Borough.

**How will these plans be funded?**

The borough receives funding each year through Transport for London for regular low-cost schemes and initiatives, some of which goes on projects such as Cycleways and some of which is distributed through the Local Committees. Other works, such as maintenance on the Transport for London Road Network (including the A232 and A24), is funded directly by TfL. There is also a range of other funding opportunities available, such as the Office for Low Emission Vehicles who provide funding towards electric vehicle charging points.

The Sustainable Transport Strategy (STS) makes it very clear that developers of new homes and retail/employment spaces will be expected to contribute towards sustainable transport measures in the borough and this is reinforced by the planning guidelines set out in the various chapters. But this alone will not take away from the fact that, compared to neighbouring boroughs, Sutton continues to receive the lowest level of transport capital funding per head of population than any other borough in London. The STS will therefore

serve as a call to TfL, the Mayor of London and central government to support the significant investment needed in public transport provision, such as the bus network, higher frequency train services, support for the London Cancer Hub and the extension of the London tram network to Sutton.

**Why are you proposing schemes and plans if there might not be funding for them?**

Aside from the regular Transport for London funding and developer contributions, there are often opportunities to bid for certain 'challenge' funds for particular types of project, such as cycle parking, electric vehicle charging and safety schemes. The time-limited nature of many of these funds means that it is important to have a clear understanding of local needs and potential schemes so that the Council is ready to proceed quickly as opportunities arrive or funds become available. The Sustainable Transport Strategy will help us bring forward schemes more quickly and improve our chances of securing larger pots of funding. The proposals also give new developers, Transport for London and the government a much clearer picture of the borough's priorities and how new homes and businesses would be accommodated within the borough.