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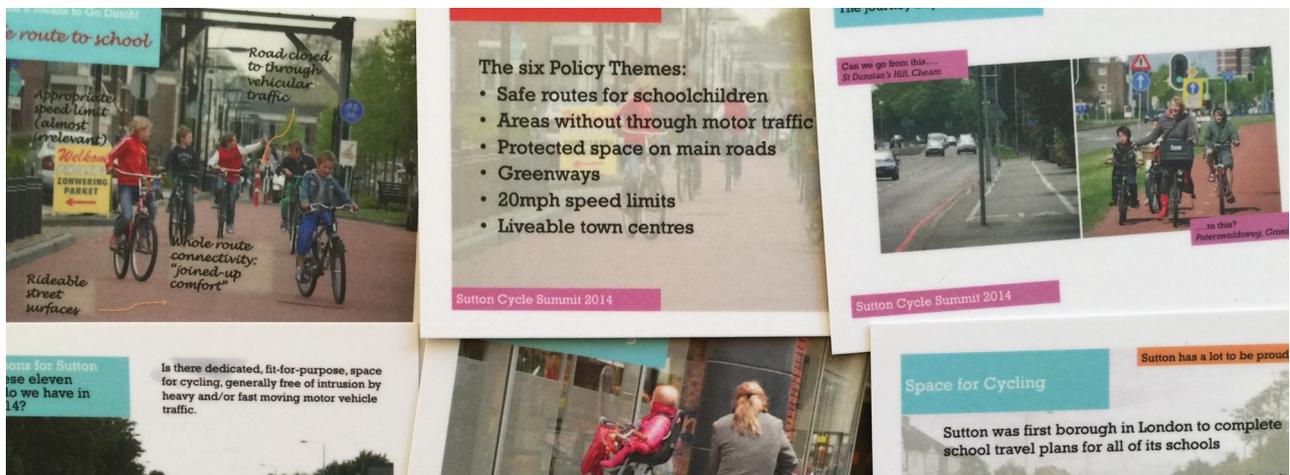


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Borough news and update from Get Sutton Cycling | March 2015

Welcome to the first borough news and update from Get Sutton Cycling

We hope you find this update interesting and informative. It is our intention to produce a newsletter with every edition of *London Cyclist* from now on. As a member of the London Cycling Campaign in Sutton, Get Sutton Cycling is your forum for cycling in your borough. So your contributions are important. Please get in touch, or feel free to drop-in at any of our upcoming and informal meetings held on the third Monday of alternate months in central Sutton (16 March, 18 May). Check website for full details.



A new Cycling Strategy for Sutton in 2015

Sutton Council is currently in the process of commissioning consultants to produce a new cycling strategy for the borough. Potentially very good news! There is the expectation that the council will hold a workshop, or open forum event, to seek the views of local cycling group representatives and other interested parties in the coming weeks. A draft version of the strategy will be available by the end of April.

The delivery of this cycling strategy, which will outline the council's strategic position on cycling and act as a statement of policy, was one of the outcomes that resulted from a meeting we had with the council at the end of September 2014. We had requested the meeting in order to discuss our concerns regarding the low level of support by Sutton's councillors to the Space for Cycling initiative (the lowest level in any London borough, with the exception of Bexley).

It is hoped that this strategic report will set cycling in the context of utility transport, not just as a leisure activity or a sport pursuit. Ideally it will outline the challenges associated with creating inviting space for cycling, as well as emphasise how these challenges will be met both politically and technically. The strategy will also need to clearly demonstrate how cycling can help with issues such as place making in the medium term, and public health in the longer term. To be successful, a totally new approach to cycling is required. An approach that is different from what has been done before.

Space for Cycling ‘ward asks’ review still awaited

Nearly five months have now passed since we were told by Sutton Council to expect, within a month, a review of our ‘ward asks’. Perhaps this delay in responding to our specific proposals is not such a bad thing though. After all, a strategic report from council lead members on the principles of the Space for Cycling ethos would, ideally, take priority over the assessment of the ‘asks’. A strategic report would set the context, give an indication of the degree of aspiration, assist decisions on feasibility and deliverability, and determine the availability of funding (both in terms of the likelihood of the receipt and the likely magnitude). Clearly aspiration and the assessment process are going to be linked too.

Whether this review, when it comes, reflects what can be expected of the cycling strategy, or whether the cycling strategy will enlighten future decisions, only time will tell!

For more on this, search “get Sutton cycling space for cycling”

Sustainable Transport Strategy

Our response to Sutton council’s draft Sustainable Transport Strategy was submitted in early January 2015. We are delighted that Sutton aims to become London’s most sustainable suburb.

For more on this, search “get Sutton cycling transport strategy”

More pavements in St Helier to be shared-use

In the summer of 2014 we responded to a proposal to convert more of the footway on the west side of Green Wrythe Lane to a “footway cycleway”. Basically, we didn’t like the idea! See **Green Wrythe Lane footway cycleway proposal – a lack of vision for cycling** (and subsequent updates) for the full story.

We also wrote to TfL to ask whether this scheme, effectively a pavement conversion with the aspiration to increase cycling levels by 1%, was a good way to spend £100,000 or more. As a result, TfL asked the council to put the scheme on hold, and sent a senior cycling specialist to come and have a look. The upshot of this joint council/TfL review appears to be that the scheme is to go ahead (so presumably £100,000 of cycling money will be spent on this), but that it will be “rebadged as a pedestrian scheme” and will not be described as part of Sutton’s cycle network.

Despite the disappointment that something much better than this is not to be provided for cycling along Green Wrythe Lane, perhaps this signals the end to proposals to convert pavements to cycling use in the borough.

Our thanks to Councillor Neil Garratt for raising this, and other cycling related issues, at the full Council meeting in January.

For more on this, search “get Sutton cycling green wrythe lane”

Cycle rides for beginners continue to be organised by *Cyclism* every Saturday throughout the year, starting from the Mansion Café in Nonsuch Park at 2pm. Similar rides start from the Pavilion Café in Beddington Park on the third Saturday of every month. We are told that no one gets left behind!

For more details of these rides, and forthcoming spring and summer evening rides, visit cyclismsutton.org.uk.