

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

LOCAL COMMITTEE (SURREY HEATH)



DATE: 4 OCTOBER 2018

LEAD OFFICER: BECKY WILLSON, TRANSPORT PLANNER (CYCLING)

SUBJECT: SURREY HEATH LOCAL CYCLING PLAN

DIVISION: All

SUMMARY OF ISSUE:

As part of the Surrey Transport Plan, a Surrey Cycling Strategy was approved by Cabinet in December 2013. The Strategy set out a role for Local Committees to oversee the development of Local Cycling Plans. This report presents the Surrey Heath Local Cycling Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Local Committee (Surrey Heath) is asked to agree that:

- (i) The Surrey Heath Local Cycling Plan as attached in Annex A is approved and,
- (ii) work continues on prioritising and advancing the cycle routes where possible.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Surrey Heath Local Cycling Plan has been created in line with the Surrey Cycling Strategy and has been instigated by, and developed with, local residents who wish to see more, and better, cycle provision in the borough.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 The Surrey Cycling Strategy (2014-2026) recognises the health, pollution and congestion reduction benefits of encouraging a shift away from personal motorised transport to cycling. A good quality cycling network also enables transport for those who are unable, or chose not, to use a motorised vehicle. The aim of the strategy is more people cycling in Surrey, more safely.
- 1.2 Objective 2 of the Surrey Cycling Strategy states that 'Surrey Local Committees will oversee development of Local Cycle Plans that reflect local priorities and issues.' These are to be developed in partnership and the strategy invites local involvement to the local cycle plans. This ensures the Local Cycle Plans are responsive to local needs and concerns and supports the objectives of the overall strategy.
- 1.3 The Surrey Heath Local Cycling Plan also supports the Surrey Heath Local Transport Strategy and the Surrey Heath Core Strategy Spatial Vision. The latter

states its aim to improve travel choice and transport services to encourage sustainable travel patterns and, in particular, reduce reliance on the private car.

- 1.4 The Surrey Heath Local Cycling Plan was instigated due to the interest of local residents and councillors. An initial meeting was held in West End on 16 January 2018 after Councillor Mike Goodman asked local residents about their views on local cycling issues on Facebook. This generated significant positive interest and over 20 local residents came out on a snowy evening to attend a meeting about the cycle plan. Follow up meetings were held in February and July which were also well supported. The overwhelming sentiment was that residents wanted cycle routes to local key destinations such as schools and train stations.
- 1.5 The local cycling plan identifies a network of desirable infrastructure around Surrey Heath and is attached as Annex A. This has been developed by identifying routes to key destinations, and using local resident's knowledge of desirable routes and useful shortcuts or tracks away from the highway.
- 1.6 Regarding infrastructure, the Surrey Cycling Strategy states, "We will improve infrastructure for cycling by securing funding to develop high quality, joined up cycle routes, taking account of international best practice, utilising off road and quiet streets, and separating cyclists from motorised traffic on busy roads where feasible. We will focus our efforts on routes that connect where people live with where they work, shop and go to school and with rail and bus stations."
- 1.7 This approach arises from the view that most people do not wish to mix with heavy traffic when cycling and that the prospect of doing so prevents some people cycling altogether. This was reflected in the consultation for the Strategy, where the most common response to the questions, 'what would encourage you to cycle more often?' and 'which of the following would encourage you to take up cycling?' was in both cases, 'more cycle routes, particularly away from busy traffic'.
- 1.8 This also supports the Surrey Transport Plan (LTP3) which aims to help people to meet their transport and travel needs effectively, reliably, safely and sustainably within Surrey; in order to promote economic vibrancy, protect and enhance the environment and improve the quality of life
- 1.9 The strategy also recognises infrastructure provision by itself will not achieve the full potential benefits of cycling. The local residents who input into the plan were keen that promotion, cycle training and driver education were also covered. Promotion and events are an essential especially in relation to public health programmes that are trying to reduce levels of inactivity in both the child and adult population.
- 1.10 Skills and behaviour are another key area of activity. A person cycling needs to achieve a basic level of traffic awareness, skills and control even if their intention is to ride only on quiet roads or cycle paths. Initiatives such as Drive Smart address all road users including people cycling; lawful behaviour and understanding and respect of other road users.

2. ANALYSIS:

- 2.1 In Surrey Heath 1.9% commute to work by cycle according to 2011 census data (Surrey as a county is 2.5%). This is despite 43% of residents having a commute of less than 10 kilometres; a distance most people could leisurely cycle in 30 minutes. This is due in part to very busy roads and very little cycle infrastructure. The total combined length of off-carriageway cycle infrastructure in Surrey Heath is 23 kilometres (14 miles). The existing cycle infrastructure is not continuous and does not present a practical network to those wishing to cycle. Figure 1 shows the current cycle infrastructure in the borough.

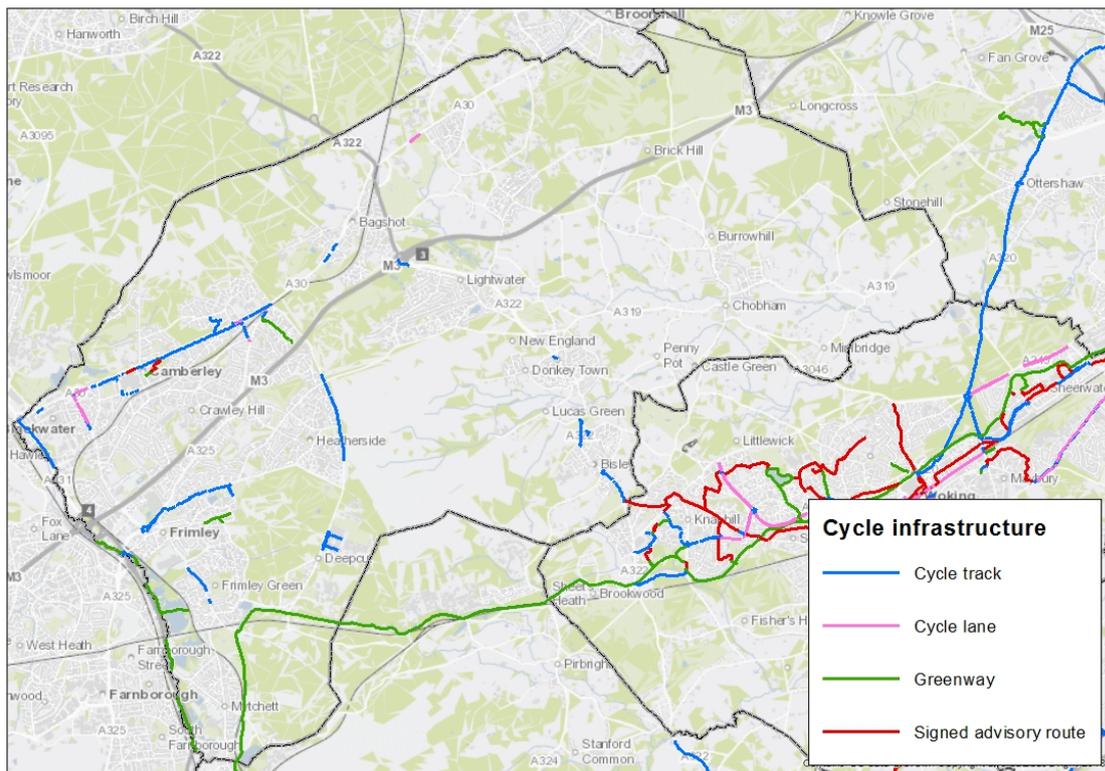


Figure 1: Existing cycle infrastructure in Surrey Heath

- 2.2 Despite the low levels of cycling 53% of borough residents own a bicycle and, of those who don't, 18% have access to one (Surrey Cycling Monitoring Survey 2014). Surrey County Council offers subsidised cycle training to all schools and 14 of the boroughs schools take up this offer annually.
- 2.3 The level of interest in the Surrey Heath Cycling Plan shows there are many residents who see the benefit of investing in cycle infrastructure. The Department for Transport's sponsored Propensity to Cycle tool shows where the greatest increases can be seen in cycling. Figure 2 is based on the 'Government Target' scenario which predicts where the biggest increases could be if nationally cycling is at double the level it is now. This is weighted so areas with many short, flat trips and a below-average current rate of cycling are projected to more than double. Conversely, areas with above-average levels of cycling and many long-distance hilly commuter routes will experience less than a doubling.

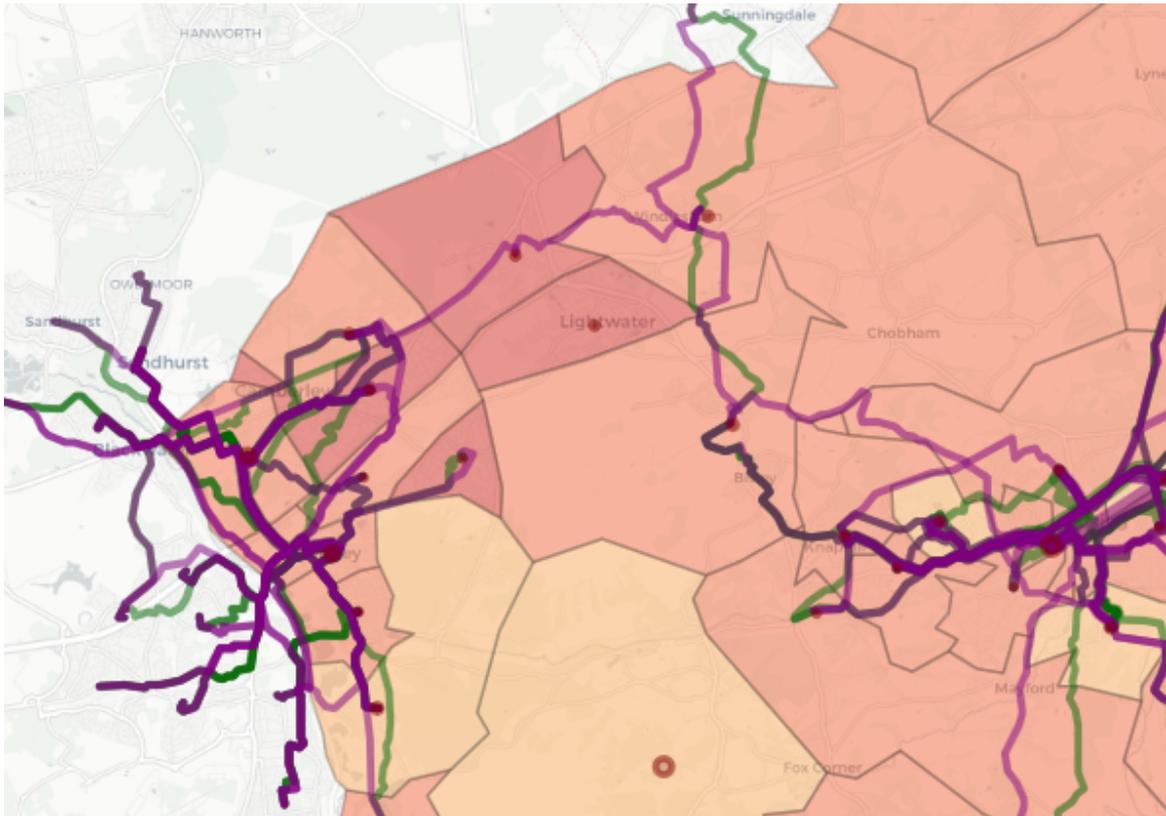


Figure 2: Potential increase in cyclists based on the Propensity to Cycle Tool under the government target scenario

- 2.4 Creating a network of paths that are separated from busy roads will require substantial capital investment and it is a long-term prospect. The Department of Transport does make significant sums available for transport schemes, including cycling, either directly or through Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). Highway authorities have to bid when a pot of funding is announced. The timescale for bids can be relatively short. It is an advantage in bidding processes if schemes have been developed to a point that shows they are feasible, have benefits and have a reliable cost estimate.
- 2.5 Annex A shows the suggested network of cycle routes that has been developed through analysis of origins and destinations and through consultation with local residents and community groups.

3. OPTIONS:

- 3.1 The development of the Surrey Heath Local Cycle Plan has identified numerous routes around the borough. As we lack the resources to implement significant lengths of cycle routes it is suggested that the next steps are to create a prioritised list of routes and explore funding opportunities.

4. CONSULTATIONS:

- 4.1 The local cycling plan has been developed in partnership with councillors, local residents and community groups. This involved three local meetings which were held in West End Village Hall, regular emails to all local contacts, and information hosted online.
- 4.2 Information on the Surrey Heath Local Cycling Plan remains available online at www.travelsmartsurrey.info/cycling. This includes a link to an anonymous survey where comments can be left on the plan. Over the spring and summer 2018 period in-depth comments were left online, or directly emailed, suggesting relevant cycle routes and commenting on what should be included. Route suggestions have been included on the map in Annex A. Comments not relating to infrastructure were around promotion, cycle training and driver education and these are included in other areas of the local cycle plan which are addressed on the Surrey Heath Local Cycling Plan webpage.
- 4.3 The Surrey Cycling Strategy was also fully consulted on when it was developed during 2013/14.

5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:

- 5.1 All the Infrastructure identified by the Surrey Heath Local Cycling Plan will require considerable revenue funding to develop and capital investment to deliver.
- 5.2 The purpose of the plan is to provide a strategic approach to delivering cycle infrastructure over the short, medium and long-term.
- 5.3 Possible sources of funding may involve developer contributions/Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) or bids to the Local Enterprise Partnership, Department for Transport (DfT), or other grant bodies.
- 5.4 The Local Committee may choose to fund some improvements where there are lower costs involved.

6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:

- 6.1 An equalities impact assessment was undertaken for the Surrey Cycling Strategy and covers the Local Cycling Plan.

7. LOCALISM:

- 7.1 The Surrey Heath Local Cycling Plan will be a borough wide document. Specific actions will have local impacts in their specified areas, and these will be assessed as proposals are brought forwards.

8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	No significant implications arising from this report
Sustainability (including Climate Change and Carbon Emissions)	Set out below.
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant implications arising from this report
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	No significant implications arising from this report
Public Health	Set out below.

8.1 Sustainability implications

Increasing levels of walking and cycling can have a positive impact in congestion reduction and a consequent reduction in carbon emissions.

The Surrey Heath Local Cycling Plan has identified a network of routes to enable and encourage cycling in the borough and suggested the types of improvements needed. The creation of well-designed cycle routes connecting residential areas with key destinations will encourage modal shift which has implications for health, improved mobility, accessibility and reduced dependency on private vehicles.

8.2 Public Health implications

Active travel (walking and cycling), particularly for utility trips such as travelling to work, school and shopping, is considered a key deliverable against public health priorities such as obesity and air quality. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Guidance – Physical Activity: Walking and cycling states that walking and cycling reduces the risk of heart disease, stroke, cancer, obesity and type 2 diabetes. It can help keep the musculoskeletal system healthy and promote mental wellbeing.

9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 9.1 The cycle provision in Surrey Heath is currently disjointed and scarce however there is local support for improved cycle infrastructure. This will provide local residents with opportunities to cycle rather than drive and lead to many benefits such as improved health for those who cycle, and reduced congestion and pollution for all residents.
- 9.2 It is recommended that the Local Committee (Surrey Heath) approves the Surrey Heath Local Cycling Plan.
- 9.3 As there is such an extensive network of suggested routes it is suggested that further work is done to prioritise these based on greatest benefits and available (or potential) funding.

10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- 10.1 If the Local Committee (Surrey Heath) approve the Surrey Heath Cycling Plan it will be used as a basis to seek funding for cycle improvements. As new policy documents are being written or updated for Surrey Heath, such as the Local Transport Strategy the Local Cycling Plan will inform these plans.
- 10.2 As there is such an extensive network of suggested routes it is suggested that further work is done to prioritise these based on greatest benefits and available (or potential) funding.

Contact Officer:

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Consulted:

County officers
 Elected members
 Local residents
 Community groups
 Schools

Annexes:

Annex A: Surrey Heath Cycling Plan map

Sources/background papers:

- Census data (2011)
- County Cycling Monitoring Survey data (2015) Summary here:
https://www.travelsmartsurrey.info/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/71591/cycling-monitor-summary.pdf
- Propensity to Cycle Tool – www.pct.bike
- Surrey Cycling Strategy (2014-2026)
- Surrey Cycling Strategy Equality Impact Assessment
- Surrey Heath Cycling Plan webpage <https://www.travelsmartsurrey.info/cycling/district-and-borough-cycling-plans/surrey-heath-cycling-plan>
- Surrey Heath Core Strategy
- Surrey Heath Local Transport Plan (2014)
- Surrey Transport Plan (LTP3)

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