

Streetspace Plan

Appendix A - Transport response - Covid 19

July 2020

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Foreword

Covid-19 and the lockdown is a historic event that has changed how we live, work and travel. It has shown that traffic can be significantly reduced and the benefits of cleaner, quieter and safer streets. If Southwark maintains less driving and enables modal change, the borough would see sustained and significant improvements in the environment and many people's quality of life and their work / life balance. These aims would also help to overcome the significant reduction to only 13% to 15% of capacity on public transport due to social distancing. This traffic reduction and modal change would especially improve the health of vulnerable people and communities who have greater respiratory and cardiac problems.

This Streetspace Plan follows the ethos of the Movement Plan and sets a strategic approach to responding to the short term challenges and working towards securing long term change to retain as many transport, health and environmental benefits as possible by accelerating the shift to active travel. Key to this is maintaining 50% less driving than before the lockdown and modal change to increase active travel.

Southwark's Streetspace Plan is based around five key actions:

- Supporting social distancing through reactive measures and permanent changes.
- Encourage walking and cycling and prevent an increase in private car use.
- Working with TfL to change main roads and their key junctions.
- Promoting access to the council's Highways Commonplace website, installing the best and most practical ideas from the public.
- Informing people of their travel options and advising residents and businesses on home working.

Councillor Richard Livingstone

Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport and the Climate Emergency

Introduction

“The virus is rewriting our imaginations. What felt impossible has become thinkable. We’re getting a different sense of our place in history. We know we’re entering a new world, a new era.”

Kim Stanley Robinson

What is a Streetspace Plan?

How, when, and where people travel has changed and will continue to shift and change, it will be phased and incremental and pose a series of challenges. Southwark’s Streetspace Plan consists of three components, how movement has changed, our immediate response, and our longer term response.

Our aspiration is to maintain 50% less driving than before the lockdown and retain as many transport, health and environmental benefits as possible from the lockdown by accelerating our shift to active travel.

The Movement Plan, Covid-19 and lockdown travel response through its three focus areas, for:

People - Covid-19 has highlighted the inequalities in our society and the high negative impacts of this disease and lockdown on certain groups.

Place - There are certain places where it is difficult for people to socially distance such as bridges and tunnels, high streets and transport interchanges, which can have narrow pavements and often lack crossings.

Experience - The lockdown has reduced driving and public transport use by about 80%. These significant reductions in traffic have created quieter and safer streets with more walking and cycling and greater use of nearby shops and parks. This has made people more aware of pollution, their health and quality of life issues, and is encouraging a new localism.

Our responsibilities

The council has a public duty to maintain a safe highway, which can include making changes to street layouts. As the Highway Authority, we also have an obligation under the Traffic Management Act (TMA) 2004 to ensure road networks are managed effectively to support our communities and their movement, improve safety, minimise congestion and disruption to all traffic, including pedestrians and vulnerable road users.

The council also has a statutory duty to maintain the highway under the Highways Act (Section 41). We work 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to ensure that we are keeping our streets in a good state of repair.

As a council we have legal responsibilities for transport, planning, and public health in Southwark. They include:

- Ensuring road networks are managed effectively to minimise congestion and disruption, reduce collisions and improve safety.
- Improving air quality.
- Creating good homes, spaces and workplaces.
- Promoting health and wellbeing, addressing levels of physical inactivity and obesity.

The Streetspace Plan details how we are responding to these challenges through the delivery of our duties and responsibilities.

Streetspace for London

Launched in May 2020 by TfL, the Streetspace for London programme seeks to address the issues raised by the pandemic and to look towards a more positive transport future.

What do we know?

Movement in Southwark

Southwark's streets support over a quarter of a million motor vehicle trips every day.¹ The purposes of these trips include commuting, business, deliveries, waste collection, work, education and leisure.

88% of traffic on our streets is cars and taxis with the remaining 12% being buses, vans and larger vehicles. There has been no real change to these numbers since 2010.²

Approximately one in five people use buses on a daily basis,³ and these delays impact their journey experience. 3% of people travel by cycle.

40% of households in Southwark have access to a car⁴ and of these only 22% use it as their main mode of transport. Approximately 33% of car trips by residents in London are less than 2 kilometres which could be easily walked in under 25 minutes or cycled in about 8 minutes.⁵ More than 50% of air pollution is caused by motor vehicles. And there is higher pollution in the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods, and in the most ethnically diverse areas, compared to the least deprived places⁶.

How has movement changed?

During lockdown, travel focussed on providing for essential workers both on public transport and on our streets with relaxation of road use and emission charges.

For the broader community, walking as exercise and for the journey to the shops has become a daily routine for many households. Cycling has seen a significant increase with the cycling industry reporting a 15% rise in sales. 55% of Londoners report noticing an improvement in air quality since the lockdown began.⁷

As lockdown eases, and social distancing is required, London's public transport capacity is estimated to run at less than 15% of pre-crisis levels. Millions of journeys a day will need to be made by alternative modes. Early modelling by TfL has revealed there could be more than a 10-fold increase in kilometres cycled, and up to five times the amount of walking, compared to pre-COVID levels, if demand returns.¹

To enable this to happen, TfL will rapidly repurpose its streets (the TLRN and possibly SRN) to serve this unprecedented demand for walking and cycling in a major new strategic shift.

A recent YouGov poll found that after lockdown Londoners say that about

- 40% will use public transport less
- 50 will walk more
- 41% plan to drive more

Equity and COVID-19

COVID-19 has highlighted inequalities in our society and the need for equity to be the leading factor in determining our projects and programmes. Early evidence suggests that some people are more susceptible and exposed to COVID-19 than others; resulting in higher rates of illness and death. These vulnerable groups include people with underlying chronic health conditions (such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, hypertension, respiratory conditions, diabetes and obesity), the elderly, BAME groups, those on low incomes and men. This is also supported by the work plan for 'Southwark stands together' to reduce inequalities in the borough.

Londoners living in more deprived areas are already more likely to be impacted by exposure to higher levels of air pollution and road danger, which is likely to make them more vulnerable to COVID-19. Those on low incomes are more likely to be key workers which means they are more exposed to COVID-19, cannot work from home, and are most affected by the reduced public transport capacity.⁸

The lockdown has highlighted certain places in Southwark where it is harder for people to socially distance. These include high density areas, bridges and tunnels, cut throughs, high streets and transport interchanges - many of which have narrow pavements and often lack sufficient crossings and cycle facilities.

¹ TfL, The Challenge for walking in central London, p4.

Streetspace programme

Our priorities

We need to urgently reallocate street space to provide safe and appealing spaces to walk and cycle as an alternative to driving due to the reduced capacity on the public transport network. Suppressing motorised traffic while allowing essential journeys to take place, is key to ensuring we manage our road and public transport networks to maximise our ability to keep people moving safely.

We will do this through:

Enabling social distancing and supporting walking and cycling

The council has introduced social distancing measures on several of our shopping streets, so people can pass each other and queue to access shops. Southwark will monitor these places, as further measures may be necessary as more shops, schools, businesses and premises reopen.

Strategic work to better manage the Movement Network

Southwark wants to discuss with TfL various ideas for strategic measures on main roads to help reduce traffic and encourage modal change.

Working together

Continue to work with neighbouring councils and TfL to coordinate our transport measures to ensure we are encouraging walking, cycling and safe use of public transport over driving.

Continue to work together with the community and partners to identify and deliver safe, efficient and effective movement.

Ensuring people have the best information to travel safely, efficiently and actively.

Moving quickly

The council has accelerated its Highway's work programme and identified some new measures to

encourage walking, cycling and public transport, and discourage driving.

These emergency measures are being introduced using a process called "experimental orders" in the coming weeks and months.

What will success look like?

Our streets will be quieter, safer and more attractive for everyone. We will have continued to reduce the speed and volume of private motor vehicles on our streets. Our town centres and retail shopping will be cleaner, more spacious and prosperous.

Many more people will choose to walk and cycle. We will have made dramatic improvements in air quality and have achieved our Vision Zero target for road safety. Deliveries and servicing impacts will be mitigated through fewer trips, safer, greener and quieter vehicles.

Delivering the Streetspace Plan

Delivery plan

The delivery plan is split into four parts;

- Initial assessment, advice and / or enforcement, and immediate intervention measures where needed at significant pinch points.
- Emergency reactive measures in identified hotspots to assist with social distancing.
- Neighbourhood measures – which deliver local interventions focused on the Southwark highway. These include planned measures that have been priorities and measures drawn from the public via the council's website.
- Strategic initiatives - working with transport providers including TfL.

The list of works as this is changing almost daily, particularly with the way the works are funded.

Initial assessment, advice and / or enforcement and immediate intervention measures

Following the commencement of lockdown in March 2020, the council worked quickly to implement various “quick win” intervention measures across the Borough. These included:

- **Rye Lane** – footway widening from Holly Grove to Blenheim Road (outside Peckham Rye station) achieved by one way working traffic lights.
- **Rye Lane** – social distancing footway markings, suspension of parking bays / loading bays and signage at various heavily pedestrian trafficked locations (banks – ATM's, shops, supermarket).
- **Walworth Road** – suspension of loading bays and barriers, footway markings, setting up queuing systems with barriers and signage.
- **East Street** – queuing system to help social distancing established with barriers.
- **Thames Path (various locations)** - installing signage, posters and footpath markings plus regular warden attendance to monitor and advise cyclists / joggers.

At a significant number of other locations across the Borough, highways, parking, enforcement, network management and the warden teams have worked together to monitor reported and identified hot spots and pinch points for social distancing problems. Where necessary, advice has been given which has usually resolved the problem. Additional measures have included installing posters, signage and social distancing footway markings.

Emergency reactive measures

Reactive Measures (to be installed June)

| | |
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| Elephant Road | Extending footways to accommodate social distancing |
| Walworth Road | Suspend parking bays to extend footways to accommodate social distancing |
| Lordship Lane | Extend footways between Hansler Road and Bawdale Road to accommodate social distancing |
| Bermondsey Street | Suspend parking bays to extend footways to accommodate social distancing in 5 locations. |
| Rye Lane | Prohibition of motor vehicles from Hanover Park to Copeland Road and the introduction of loading bays on Bournemouth Road and Hanover Park |
| Bedale Street | Extend footways to accommodate social distancing |
| Stoney Street | Extend footways to accommodate social distancing |
| Park Street | Extend footways by suspending parking bays to accommodate social distancing between 1-5 |
| Lavington Street | Introduce 1-way traffic flow and widen footways from the junction of Ewer Street to Great Suffolk Street |
| Mermaid Court | Pedestrianise Mermaid Court from Borough High Street to 1 Mermaid Court to provide wider footways for pedestrian use |

Neighbourhood measures

Cycle routes (to be installed June/July)

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| C7 Southwark Bridge Road | Introduction of with-flow segregated cycleway between Southwark Bridge Road and Borough Road. |
| Rye Lane cycle links | Proposed contraflow cycle lanes onto Choumert Grove, Choumert Road and McDermott Road. |
| Gt Suffolk St / Southwark Bridge Road area wide traffic | Proposed interventions to improve cycling and walkability of the area bound by Southwark Street to the north and Webber Street to the south. |
| Tanner St to Willow Walk cycle route | Modal filter on Gedling Place, upgrade cycle crossings on Abbey Street and Grange Road to parallel crossings. |
| Braganza Street | Convert existing right turn filter from Kennington Park Road into Braganza Street into a cycle phase. |
| Lower Road ext to CS4 | Introduction of cycle facilities including signal changes. |
| Rotherhithe to Peckham cycle route | Acceleration of measures. |

Low traffic neighbourhoods (to be installed June/July)

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| Dulwich Village | Trial closure of Calton Avenue between Dulwich Village and Court Lane to provide additional footway space beside local shops, prevent rat running traffic and supports cycleway 17 Green Dale - includes investigating complimentary measures to minimise displaced traffic onto the local network to expand the Low Traffic Neighbourhood where practicable. |
| Dulwich Village Phase 2 | Phase 2 continuation of above with further investigations to ensure Low Traffic Neighbourhood and support social distancing. |
| Dog Kennel Hill / Champion Hill Champion Hill No Entry trial | Convert signal aspects on Grove Hill Road phase to cycles only to reduce through traffic which is beside Dog Kennel Hill Primary School and enhance cycleway 17. |
| Melbourne Grove South | To close Melbourne Grove at a point between Tell Grove and Ashbourne Grove to reduce motor traffic and encourage walking and cycling. |

School Streets (to be installed June/July)

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| First phase to implement experimental TMOs for a permeable closure / timed closures at 4 schools. | Comber Grove Primary School. Goodrich Primary School. |
| To assess all schools in the borough for LSP. | Rye Oak Primary School. Camelot Primary School. To assess remaining schools in the borough for LSP for permeable closure options (approx 20 per month for 3 months) to assess schools. prepare and make experimental orders. |

School streets measures (to be installed July/Aug/Sept)

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| At any time closures | Where feasible introduce at any time closures around school gates to help assist with social distancing and encourage active travel. |
| Footway widening | Where at any time closures are not possible, introduce footway widenings around schools to assist with social distancing. |
| Timed closures | Where the above are not possible work with schools to help them manage the surrounding streets to provide more space at peak times. |

Behaviour change (ongoing with cyclist training to commence once schools return in full)

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| Peddle My Wheels | Flexible bicycle rental scheme to trial a new or nearly new bike. Free delivery to your door. Free cycle skills sessions to increase your confidence. Scheme to include adapted bikes and cargo bikes for small businesses to help take advantage of the demand for local home deliveries. |
| Cyclist Training | Cycle safety training provided to help improve cyclist skills to enable them to safely cycle on the road. Controlling the bicycle safely, being seen and understanding the rules of the road help to reduce cyclist vulnerability. |

Fix a Bike

A programme designed for schools, groups and individuals to provide an introduction to bike maintenance, repair and how to look after your bike through practical, engaging and inclusive workshops.

Sessions also include the way people think about using their bikes by introducing a route planning section using online mapping tools.

Space at town centres (to be developed and installed Aug/Sept)

Walworth Road Area

Acceleration of the Walworth Rd Low Emission Neighbourhood traffic reduction measures to discourage traffic in local streets, accident reduction and increase opportunities to walk and cycle.

Peckham Rye

Peckham Rye east side, north of Nunhead Lane, convert road to buses and cycles only and overcome barrier on longer cycle route.

Bermondsey Street

Road closure on Bermondsey Street that redirects traffic and creates a permeable closure between Whites Grounds and Tanner Street. Provide cycle contraflow on Snowfields and in the northern section of Bermondsey. Trial bagging over signals at the Bermondsey Street / St Thomas Street / Crucifix Lane and converting to raised, give way junction.

Consort Rd

Zebra crossing on Consort Road to link Cossal Estate to Rye Lane and improve conditions and safety at this junction.

Phase 2 Space at town centres

To review and develop schemes requested by public using the COVID-19 consultation link managed by Commonplace website.

Glossary

Active travel: Ways of travelling that involve physical activity. It commonly refers to walking and cycling, but can include foot scooters, running, roller skating, etc.

Air quality: The extent of harmful pollutants in the air. Poor air quality occurs when pollutants reach high enough concentrations to endanger health of people and the environment.

Congestion Charge: The charge applied to motor vehicles entering a defined area of central London, to reduce traffic congestion and its associated impacts.

Cyclists: All people who use different types of bicycles including tricycles, hand-cycles and other adapted cycles, and e-bicycles.

Intervention: A proposal, scheme or measure that seeks to deliver improvements to the existing highway network.

Mode share: Also, known as modal share or split, which is the percentage of travellers or the number of trips made using a particular type of transportation. It is typically reported through travel surveys.

Public realm: the space between and within buildings that is publicly accessible, including streets, squares, forecourts, parks and open spaces. In addition, it can include privately owned public spaces which provide parts of the public realm, but with more conditions on its use.

TLRN: The Transport for London Route Network of strategic streets, which is operated and maintained by TfL, and comprises about 5% of the road network in London.

Vision Zero: A road safety initiative that aims to achieve a highway system with no fatalities or serious injuries from collisions with road traffic.

End notes

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- ² Southwark Council (2017), Annual automated traffic counts with ARX classification 2010-2017 (Accessed March 2018). Available at <https://geo.southwark.gov.uk/connect/analyst/mobile/#/main?mapcfg=Southwark%20Highways>
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- ⁴ Southwark Council (2018) 'JSNA Factsheet 2018-19 Demography' (Accessed 12 August 2018). Available at <https://www.southwark.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/public-health/health-and-wellbeing-in-southwark-jsna/southwark-profile>
- ⁵ Transport for London, Analysis of walking potential, 2016. Accessible at: <http://content.tfl.gov.uk/analysis-of-walking-potential-2016.pdf>
- ⁶ Mayor of London, The Mayor's Transport Strategy, 2017, p24. Accessible at: <https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/mayors-transport-strategy-2018.pdf>
- ⁷ Transport for London, London Streetspace Plan – Interim Guidance to Boroughs, 15 May 2020. Available at: <http://content.tfl.gov.uk/lsp-interim-borough-guidance-main-doc.pdf>
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