



Highways and Transport Team
5th Floor Laurence House
Catford
SE6 4RU

23rd June 2020

Dear Resident/Business,

Re: Lewisham and Lee Green Healthy Neighbourhood (HN) – Community led traffic reduction update and COVID-19 implications

Since Lewisham Council last wrote to you in January 2020 officers had been working with Transport for London (TfL) to ensure that the proposed Lewisham and Lee Green HN trial was acceptable to them. However, the Covid-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on people's daily lives and how they travel. This has an impact on the HN programme, and so we are writing to you with an update. This letter is being sent to all households and businesses within the HN area and those households and businesses outside of the area who we have written to previously.

In order to protect public health and safety, local authorities across London, the UK, and indeed cities all over the world, have shifted their priorities to respond to the immediate challenges the COVID-19 pandemic poses. The Council has reviewed central government and TfL guidance to make sure that we develop transport measures that are in accordance with this.

What is the latest transport guidance from central government and TfL for the Covid-19 pandemic?

With restrictions already easing, London's transport network faces one of the biggest challenges in its history. The requirement for people to continue social distancing and stay 2 metres apart will leave just 13-15% of normal capacity on TfL's bus and tube networks. TfL is urging people to change how they travel for any essential trips, by walking and cycling where possible. People are also being encouraged to shop locally and use local recreational facilities which are easier to reach on foot or by bike. Local authorities are being asked to act urgently to create favourable conditions for walking and cycling for those that are able to do so, allowing people to safely maintain social distancing guidelines, which will also ease pressure on the transport networks. Links to the latest guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reallocating-road-space-in-response-to-covid-19-statutory-guidance-for-local-authorities/traffic-management-act-2004-network-management-in-response-to-covid-19> and <http://content.tfl.gov.uk/lsp-interim-borough-guidance-main-doc.pdf>

What is the LB Lewisham's response to this guidance?

LB Lewisham is currently developing a Covid-19 transport response which you can read more about at www.lewisham.gov.uk/walkandcyclecovid19. Within this response

we will be urgently rolling out measures such as creating more pedestrian space, pop-up cycle lanes, school streets, modal filters to restrict through traffic and cycle parking facilities.

How has the Lewisham & Lee Green HN programme been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic?

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic boroughs have had the majority of their 2020/21 transport funding removed as TfL are currently under severe financial strain. This means there is currently no funding available for the HN programme in Lewisham and Lee Green. However, moving forward TfL are now funding transport projects that help facilitate safe walking and cycling via their Streetspace for London Plan, which has been developed as part of the Covid-19 transport recovery. TfL has advised that they intend to allocate funding for projects that fall within three different areas:

- 1) Quickly building a strategic cycling network, using temporary materials and including new routes, to help reduce overcrowding on the tube and trains and on busy routes;
- 2) Changing town centres so local journeys can be safely walked and cycled where possible, for example with wider pedestrian areas on high streets to give space for queues outside shops as people safely walk past while socially distancing;
- 3) Reducing traffic on residential streets right across London, through the introduction of measures such as 'modal filters' so more people can walk and cycle, whilst maintaining social distancing, as part of their daily routine. Modal filters close roads to the majority of motorised through traffic at specific points, whilst still allowing pedestrians and cyclists to pass.

In light of TfL's and the Department for Transport's guidance we have taken the decision to deliver a package of temporary measures in Lewisham & Lee Green, subject to TfL funding approval (see attached plan). These measures will be implemented using a temporary traffic order as we seek to protect public health and address safety concerns. TfL has indicated that boroughs will not be required to undertake detailed traffic modelling on the plans, due to the speed of roll out required to protect public health and safety and also the uncertainty around what future traffic levels might be.

As there is limited funding available to implement such projects across London the measures developed will focus on the areas outlined above. This means that improvements that were planned as part of the HN project, such as additional trees, benches and cycle parking will not be delivered at present.

Why are we implementing this scheme?

We have reviewed each of the modal filter locations against the available evidence, including footway widths and traffic volumes. We consider each one of them to be warranted on safety grounds, to help facilitate social distancing for those walking and cycling. In addition, this area has a high potential for journey's to be switched to cycling, based on TfL's Strategic Cycling Analysis.

The Lewisham and Lee Green HN cell was originally prioritised based on a thorough review of data and local support for action. The community has already provided valuable input into the locations of the modal filters, and the above approach allows us to monitor the scheme and also potentially add filters to neighbouring areas, as appropriate. Subject to a review of data and feedback received during this period, the scheme could then be continued via an experimental traffic order, with ongoing evaluation as traffic levels return to a 'new normal'.

Is the Lee Gate Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) consultation still taking place?

In light of the Covid-19 pandemic the council had paused all other transport and parking public consultations. However, this is currently under review, and the Lee Gate CPZ consultation will be a priority once it is considered appropriate to undertake consultations again.

What happens next?

When we wrote to you in January 2020 we said a letter drop to residents would be done at least a month before the trial starts, outlining the final proposals and the start date. Clearly the situation we now find ourselves is very different and there is a need to implement measures as a matter of urgency to protect public health and safety and therefore we unable to adhere to these timescales. The scheme will now be implemented from the week commencing **29th June 2020**.

In addition, due to social distancing requirements the borough is unable to hold any drop in events before the scheme is installed. However, there will be a dedicated project page for each location on our digital platform at <https://lewishamcovidtransport.commonplace.is/>, including a list of frequently asked questions, which will enable you to provide feedback – please sign up to ensure you are kept up to date with proposals. There will also be advanced warning notices and signage placed on affected streets.

If you don't have access to the internet please write to us at Highways and Transport, 5th Floor Laurence House, Catford, SE6 4RU, and we will do our best to respond. Please ensure that the envelope is clearly marked with 'Lewisham and Lee Green HNP – community led traffic reduction'.

How do I stay informed?

Visit project website at <https://lewishamcovidtransport.commonplace.is/>

Visit Council project website at www.lewisham.gov.uk/walkandcyclecovid19

Yours sincerely,



Kevin Sheehan
Executive Director for Housing, Regeneration and Environment

