

**COUNCIL ASSEMBLY  
WEDNESDAY 25 JANUARY 2012**

**Including themed debate on the environment**

**SOME COMMUNITY VIEWS**

**Resident 1**

Please make recycling easier for people who don't have cars, particularly as Manor Place (Reuse and Recycling Centre) is no more. The Old Kent Road is not easy for Camberwell people to reach by public transport. The issue is for the smaller items which can't be recycled and mustn't be put in with the general household waste, and aren't suitable for council pick-up, e.g. eco light bulbs. Large bins for this purpose could be placed where there are already re-cycling bins such as the car park at Butterfly Walk (Camberwell) and Camberwell Green.

**Resident 2**

With immediate effect, set up a 'Car Free Day' once a month for three months. After the initial three-month period, introduce 'Car Free Sundays' every week. Three months later, introduce 'Car Free Weekends'. Car free days are a regular practice in cities around the world. Pedestrianise large parts of Southwark (non Transport for London roads), reserving them for pedestrian and cycle use only.

Simplify the management of public spaces so that residents wishing to engage in food growing/gardening/management of any one space (park/green and amenity areas around council housing) can do so without wasting years of their time going through council funding programmes and other hoops. We need to minimise the council management of Cleaner Greener Safer projects as they are costly, not terribly efficient, and time consuming.

Produce a clear, egalitarian community asset transfer policy so that the management of buildings - including housing stock - can be made easier to access for local residents and communities.

Establish food recycling facilities in the whole of Southwark.

**Resident 3**

I would like to see Boris bikes & docking stations east of Tower Bridge Road.

**Resident 4**

This may seem simplistic but offices that leave lights on all night are a bit of a bugbear for me. I work in an office that has perimeter sensors, so during the night only the perimeter lights come on, maintaining the required effect.

**Resident 5**

I don't agree with the idea of Car Free Weekends. I barely use my car, but when I do need to use it, I need to use it at the weekends (I'm at work the rest of the week). However, encouraging more sustainable travel needs to start in the schools. On my trip to work in the mornings, I could easily take the No 78 bus from Grange Road to Old Kent Road to switch

on to the No 53, but I don't. I walk, unlike a lot of secondary school students doing the reverse journey from Old Kent Road to Grange Road on the bus. I'm sure that more people would switch from using cars to travelling by bus if their morning bus ride wasn't such a nightmare because the bus is rammed with school kids. And with fewer cars on the road, more people would cycle.

#### **Resident 6**

I'm strongly against pedestrianisation. I have severe mobility problems and rely heavily on buses being close at hand, or cabs when I can't walk as far as the bus stop.

More could be done to encourage recycling. Where I live we have one recycling bin, the size of a "Eurobin", to cater for 18 flats. It gets filled up very quickly and stuff gets placed on the ground and thrown around.

Fly-tipping is a big problem, as the bins get full really quickly and then people just dump their rubbish anywhere. I know the council is investigating the particular problem we have.

If I'm well enough I hope to go to the meeting (council assembly) on the 25th. Thanks to Southwark Council for advertising this. It is appreciated!

#### **Resident 7**

It's hard to recycle when the provision of recycling bags is so hopeless. It's ten days since we ordered them but environmental services can only undertake to provide them in 10 working days!

#### **Resident 8**

I have the opposite problem. If I put out more than one recycling bag I get a roll of 10 bags stuffed in my letter box in return. I have quite a few rolls in a drawer now.

#### **Resident 9**

It took me nearly a month to get a second supply of bags and over Christmas it was really tempting to just put all my rubbish out for landfill collection but I am committed to recycling.

Until recently my recycling was collected via blue box etc from the door step, now it's from thin easily torn bags (when you get them) left by a public bin round the corner (I can't have a wheelie bin). That's not what I would call an improvement in collection, and if collection is not good then recycling won't increase.

If you want to increase recycling you must have trouble free regular collections. Recent changes for some do not seem to be for the better. I appreciate that in Southwark one size does not fit all but there does seem to be a lack of communication and organisation.

I'm against the idea of pedestrianising all roads except Transport for London roads. I think this would increase traffic on those roads and lots of people live on them too. I know there's the argument that it can reduce overall traffic, but I think in order for that to happen we need a radical overhaul of traffic policy in more than Southwark.

Better bus services and other forms of public transport need to come first. We also need better cycle lanes (not just coloured tarmac). It needs to be much safer for cyclists if you want to increase the level of cycling.

## **Resident 10**

On the question of promoting energy efficiency - provide an easy to use and easily located 'agency' or office to send complaints or suggestions to for the local area. For example, with buildings that are lit up all night, the 'agency' could contact the building managers on the community's behalf and ask them to consider more energy efficient lighting controls.

How can we further encourage people to recycle? I have a compost bin and a weekly recycling collection and a communal recycling centre on my estate, so I think we're very lucky. We also have our communal general waste bins emptied pretty much every day. What we don't have is communal food waste bins (and we already have rat problems so this would need to be collected regularly) and we also, as far as I know, don't have a garden waste collection.

Many people on the estate who live on the upper floors got fed up with their recycling not being collected and having it hanging around on the balconies until they were told to take it back in (not easy to store for another week in some tiny flats) and have given up – so now it all goes in the landfill bins for many people.

Some form of incentive might help to encourage them again? We used to have tags on the bags so you could potentially win £1,000. I used to do it every week (but never won, sadly)! I also put my plastic recycling out separately into the recycling centre, but there is no incentive for most people to do this and in fact I suspect many don't know you can. It would be simpler if the council took ALL recycling, not just some.

How can we encourage more sustainable travel? Put pedestrians and cyclists first and other vehicles second when designing road layouts. Impose a 20mph speed limit throughout the borough and enforce it. In fact try enforcing current road infringements for a start e.g. speeding, jumping red lights (and you can include cyclists in that too).

How can the council encourage more people to look after their local environment? Start with young people. Most adults know not to trash what has been provided, but some young people see it as 'cool' to drop rubbish, paint graffiti and destroy stuff. Linking schools to green spaces is presumably already being done? Dog owners not picking up the dog mess is a perennial problem and I don't know how you change this attitude. What kind of person doesn't think it's disgusting to leave dog mess on a children's play area!? Our estate cleaners spend a ridiculous proportion of their time cleaning up after people's dogs.

## **Resident 11**

I agree with the idea of a (borough-wide) 20mph speed limit wherever possible. This puts cyclists and pedestrians on a more equal "footing" with motor traffic, and apparently even helps (motor) traffic to run more smoothly.

Extend provision of Boris bikes, ideally to the whole of Southwark, but certainly east of Tower Bridge Road, linking up with the Jubilee and overground line stations.

Make more, ideally all, streets two-way routes for cyclists. Bermondsey Street is a good example how this has an overall civilising effect on traffic speeds. It also helps with making cycling and walking the more convenient option for people. And it's good for local businesses that will profit a lot more from the "footfall" of pedestrians and cyclists.

With all the construction going on, HGV traffic is very pronounced on Southwark streets, and these vehicles are disproportionately often involved in severe or fatal collisions with cyclists and pedestrians. It should be standard for each HGV driver to receive cycle training.

Additionally, each HGV should have a clear "How's my driving?" number on their back, and any reports of bad driving should be followed up seriously. The council could set a good example with its own vehicles (and their drivers), and I imagine it has some leverage over its contractors.

Provide more cycle parking. I've noticed a definite improvement along Bermondsey Street. I think having even one or two 'Sheffield' cycle stands in front of a shop or restaurant really helps those local businesses. Where space allows, they can be dotted along the pavement, though I'd suggest it's also worth considering if one car parking space could be changed into about eight cycle parking spaces (four stands) in some locations.

I like the idea of 'car free days'. I've seen these being a great success in other cities.

In buildings where the council has influence (i.e. their own buildings, or through the planning process), please make sure truly secure cycle parking is provided, and on a generous scale. This will probably look different for each individual case, but a lot can be done. For example, allow council staff to bring bikes into their offices (perhaps dedicate an underused room to cycle parking if it's impractical for bikes to be near their desks). Consider if garages in estates can be re-dedicated as cycle parking. This would probably mean installing secure anchors and/or tougher doors, but it could be done without necessitating major building works.

These are just some ideas, but cyclists in the respective buildings would probably have useful suggestions. I would suggest to systematically ask how cycle parking for each building could be improved, and then to follow through with a plan.

Provide cycle training to schools and consider extending this invitation to the parents, so that families can get into the habit of cycling together.

As for how the council can protect the public realm, there's a real danger that problems escalate if they aren't nipped in the bud. For example, once there's some litter more littering seems to follow. Perhaps (and this may well be outside the council's remit) people found littering, leaving dog mess, destroying park benches etc, could be made to clear rubbish as community service.

I like the idea of schools, clubs, offices, or other groups "adopting" a space, be it a flower bed or a tree or a park. This would need some thinking about in terms of the details, as I am aware that it's not always easy to manage voluntary commitments, but maybe other people have some good ideas or examples of where and how such a scheme has worked in practice.

## **Resident 12**

I thoroughly agree with the training of HGV drivers to look out for cyclists, but as the cyclists are the vulnerable ones the training of all cyclists should become mandatory to prevent more injuries and deaths.

It should be impossible to take a cycle on London streets without a proficiency test of some kind, probably with some form of license or taxation. This combined with the introduction of 20mph for cars AND cycles should do wonders for the death or injury rates.

For some reason it isn't considered PC to talk about this type of thing but Southwark could lead the way in proposing compulsory cycle training at all its schools.

### **Resident 13**

For cycling and walking, please extend the types of road closures and (road) management which the council is currently using around Trinity Square and Brook Drive into the roads in Bermondsey (particularly north of Jamaica Road), and between the New Kent Road and Camberwell, particularly the Portland Street 'rat run'. That would be very much appreciated.

It would also be good to have a bit more bike parking outside pubs (like The Roebuck on Great Dover Street), not because I condone drinking and cycling, but because there are usually a few smokers and drinkers outside who deter thieves whilst I go to other shops.

### **Resident 14**

On the question of promoting energy efficiency, many buildings, retail units, and buildings sites have their lights on well after office and working hours. Using 'More London' as an example, during weekends and evenings there's a lot of unnecessary light and energy pollution. I note the health and safety reasons but I question why so many building sites these days e.g. The Shard have excessive lighting? Surely they could use low cost, movement sensitive lighting if they're worried about security?

As for promoting public transport, current bus services are often very crowded and unreliable during the rush hour and cycling is unsafe on roads in SE1 near building sites. In addition, many cyclists have not received basic road training or understand 'the highway code' and are often putting pedestrians and other road users in danger by non compliance e.g. cycling the wrong way down narrow one way streets.

Also current levels of public transport are not adequate or safe for disabled users. Ramps on buses are often broken, drivers don't help, and many buses or taxis don't stop when I'm with my disabled friend, who has also often been hurt travelling on buses that brake sharply. In addition, the upgrade to the tube system doesn't take into account the needs of disabled passengers. See the recent upgrading of Rotherhithe Station, with no facility for wheelchair access!

I would strongly urge that any reform or restriction in road use takes into account that in many cases wheelchair users are unable to use existing public transport due to prohibitive restrictions and as such need to use a car, not out of luxury, but as means of being able to carry out day to day affairs. Limiting their road use would have a detrimental impact.

### **Resident 15**

To promote energy efficiency in properties, concentrate on what you can control i.e. council buildings and the public domain. Private owners will work out the benefits of energy efficiency for themselves over time, through their self-interest. The same goes for recycling.

On the subject of sustainable transport, the 1989 combined tube, bus and rail strikes made me a confirmed commuting cyclist and runner. Reduced public transport = more sustainable travel.

To encourage more residents to look after their local environment, invite Southwark citizens to co-operate with one another in local community projects which require their energy, intelligence, and participation - and which are consistent with lower funding expectations over the long-term.

### **Resident 16**

I'm particularly interested in energy efficiency for the housing stock of my area, East Dulwich, as it is mostly Victorian, and not easy to insulate without going to enormous expense because there are no cavity walls, for example.

Most insulation offered starts with the premise that the housing stock is newish, bizarrely. For example, I have been offered in the past a subsidy on loft insulation to a depth of 8", which I believe is the current recommended depth. Frustratingly, the offer takes no account of the housing stock in this area (and indeed in large swathes of London) because the insulating material rises above the height of our Victorian joists, so without having to put down a whole loft full of new joists to raise the depth, plus a new floor over these, it is not possible to insulate our roofs (unless the loft is empty and unused, which I suspect is very unusual).

Offers on insulating lofts should recognise the range of housing stock and offer a range of solutions. For example, in the case of already in-use Victorian lofts, an insulated floor panel that could lie over the top of the joists and/or the loft floor coverings already in place, would be the answer to poor insulation in much-used lofts.

Regarding the public realm, Southwark could be much more supportive of community events such as the Upland Road Street Party, where the organisers have not only had to pay out unreasonable charges for advertising the closure of a road (which I think is not applied to the Big Lunch road closures), but have also been asked for extra charges of £1,000 for 'commercial use', which was plainly incorrect. If Southwark is really serious about this, they need to let already existing strong communities, of which there are many in Southwark, organise events through a simple, cheap, streamlined, and supportive service.

Regarding care for the more vulnerable in our society - which is clearly part of the community cohesion that Southwark is aiming to improve - what about a central Southwark point for potential volunteers to go to, in order to volunteer in their area? So, get together a list of the charitable and voluntary organisations in distinct areas all over Southwark, set up a small team to liaise with them so that the team knows which organisation needs volunteers, with which skills, where and when, and have a central contact point for all those who wish to offer their time. This could be simple and should be effective. I would use this tomorrow if I could. And it should include opportunities for schoolchildren to volunteer (for their Duke of Edinburgh training, and year 10 work placements) and young people of around 17-21.

### **Resident 17**

I'd like to see a fully signposted cycle network, and bicycles should be exempt from one way street restrictions. Ensure there's plenty of provision for secure cycle parking in all shopping areas, at all doctors' surgeries, key transport hubs, and on Southwark housing estates.

I'd also like to have local maps at all transport hubs, as well as safe cycle routes to all schools. There should be 'vulnerable road user' audits on all transport infrastructure schemes and 'cycle on prescription' schemes at doctors' surgeries.

'Rat-run' roads should be closed to enable filtered permeability to benefit cycle journey times. We also need a programme of road closures for motor vehicles to create 'streets for people' rather than 'streets for driving' through local shopping centre schemes. This would help to promote local shops and local journeys without a car. Trial 'bicycle library' projects in key housing estates.

### **Resident 18**

I think there's a future in the application of solar energy in urban environments, especially in view of recent technical progress. And all new buildings should have secure, covered cycle parking.

Southwark already does quite a good job on recycling, compared to many other authorities. I would like to have some information on the new recycling facility in Mandela Way. Is it really groundbreaking? What exactly happens to all the waste leaving my house? This information would increase my incentive to recycle.

We encourage more sustainable travel by making the walking and cycling environment attractive, safe, direct, and inviting. Southwark has an appalling reputation for fine words followed by total inaction or actual obstruction of cycling facilities. Cyclists should never be forced to share busy road space with motor vehicles unless they choose to (some cyclists are safe and competent at 20mph but most of us are not). Non-cyclists will not take up cycling if they have to share routes with motor vehicles. Sharing with pedestrians is not a solution except in very particular circumstances.

There are lots of examples in Southwark where poor design throws pedestrians and cyclists into conflict. This causes a lot of bad feeling.

Southwark can further protect the public realm by abandoning 20th century transport planning and making walking and cycling the primary transport modes of choice for local journeys. Of all the London boroughs, Southwark is uniquely placed to followed Dutch and Danish success and should set a target of 50% of journeys by bike by 2020. Mass cycling will completely transform the borough for the better and save a huge amount of money. "Regeneration" in Southwark has so far only proved to mean "traffic generation" which causes a lot of problems. People do not respect and care for an environment they drive through.

### **Resident 19**

I have the fortune to live above the Elephant and Castle roundabout, on the eastern side. It's a lovely place to live. But to see that there is doubt over installing an eastern cycle bypass for the roundabout dismays me. I have seen too many near misses, too many accidents, and two deaths from my window. That's two too many.

This is not a case of political move-making or budgetary challenges. This is a matter of life and death. Please put your full weight behind the issue and force Lend Lease (I assume) into adding a dedicated cycling route.

### **Resident 20**

People need space and most local space is run down. The council needs to redevelop these empty spaces. That means open spaces or community halls where young people can meet.

People are talking about more bins and in the right place. Each bus stop should have a bin. Street cleaning is very poor; they say there's litter all around.

If we focus on Peckham Rye's main shopping street, they don't like more cheap shops; they want to see more high street shops. People are fed up of always having to go somewhere else to buy a variety of goods. It makes the community run down.

Global environmental issues that affect people in other countries won't be important unless it's on the news. If you flag it up to the community - the need to recycle - then it can be important to them. But, when they see four horrible bins in front of their doors, it puts them off recycling.

For people to put money into energy efficiency measures in their own homes, we need to see some proof, some very clear facts about how people can save money. Also, some good examples of houses in Southwark where energy efficiency has saved money will help.

### **Resident 21**

I am an environmentalist; you wouldn't believe the amount of things I recycle. Global warming impacts on us here and on people in Africa and in the rest of the world. When sometimes we buy too much stuff, we throw so much of it away that we don't need. So now, I only buy what I need. Still some people buy too much; I see plastic bottles and even perfectly good pairs of shoes being thrown away. It's wrong! The number of things people bin - it's amazing.

I have seen the effects of climate change. I have seen rivers dry up in Sierra Leone, when they never did in previous years (Sierra Leone also suffers from deforestation). So, I think the council assembly is talking about the right sort of things, and I hope people will listen.

### **Resident 22**

We need to address damp problems on our estate. We have double glazing but we don't think it's good enough as we don't think we have cavity insulation on all estates. Also, front doors are not so well fitted and Kingswood House central heating system is old.

Our local recycling service is good, with good collection times. Unsightly recyclable items, including large cardboard boxes, tend to be piled up around blue bins.

We need more cycle lanes to make it safe. There's no provision for storing or parking bikes, so can more space for parking/storing cycles be made available?

The grass behind Kingswood House needs to be re-turfed as a result of people misusing it as a football pitch. Dog mess, caused by people outside Kingswood estate, is a problem, and dog bins tend to overflow, so can something be done about this?

### **Resident 23**

I think the council is doing a lot already to promote energy efficiency, but more can be done. We use a lot of energy that's being wasted, especially in public buildings. Environmental education for all people will help. Utility bills make people more conscious of their energy use.

As for recycling, enforcement by law is what's needed. I've been to Waltham Forest where they have separate recycling bins for composting and normal waste. It's difficult to recycle if you live in a flat.

To encourage more sustainable travel, education is needed, starting with children. We need more cycling lessons for them. Environmental education, especially with the children, goes a long way.

## **Resident 24**

The estate where I live has problems with hot water and heating system, meaning the heater is sometimes left on - even in the summer when they aren't needed. I have to call the council for someone to come and switch the system off or on. It wastes energy and then there's the call out costs.

Southwark has a 'one bag only' policy for recyclable items. Having separate recycling containers for food, paper etc, like Camden Council, will improve the recycling culture.

I work early mornings, leaving my place by car at 4am. The time factor can make it difficult. Making such travel safer will help. It all depends on having a routine.

I know people need education. I've many friends who live in council houses and say, 'It's not my house. I don't own it so I don't care about looking after it'. Kids take rubbish bags to bin areas and smash it, making a mess. Parents need to teach their kids.

## **Resident 25**

On improving energy efficiency in all Southwark properties: promote National Carbon Footprint Day throughout the borough

On promoting recycling: ensure Rachel Carson's book 'A Silent Spring' is on all Southwark Schools reading list's

On encouraging sustainable travel e.g. walking and cycling: create safe cycle routes across the whole of Southwark to enable every child who wants to cycle to school to do so without having to interact with vehicular traffic

On getting communities more involved in looking after our parks and green spaces: deliver better value and protect Southwark's green and open spaces, and increase the Cleaner, Greener, Safer fund and encourage management of projects by local residents and community groups.

## **Resident 26**

*Further encouraging people to recycle:* I believe that information about this needs to be more accessible - when I used to live in Wandsworth and recycling bags were provided which listed what could and couldn't be put in them. In our building this information is written on the bins in the basement, and therefore not accessible when needed. Also in terms of larger items and electrical items - I could not find any information about recycling of electrical equipment, and as a person without a car simply cannot transport these items to a recycling centre.

*Sustainable travel:* I am a cyclist - many cycle racks (in many boroughs) are taken up with abandoned bikes - a scheme needs to be in place to remove these, possibly after a warning notice has been attached, as knowing there is somewhere to put your bike when you arrive is very important. In terms of the Barclays cycle hire scheme, I was told by a health worker in the borough that these cost £50 a day! I know that this is mis-information, but if people who work in health don't understand the economy of using Boris bikes I imagine many other people struggle with it, so more info should be provided on this.

On a slightly separate note I believe the outdoor gyms are a great asset and very important and I hope these are maintained - cycle racks near these would be beneficial.

A note on your final question (although I'm sure no-one would support it) encouraging people to respect green spaces needs to start in schools. When I was at school (only 10 years ago) each tutor group had to do litter duty, collecting rubbish in the school grounds. Perhaps local schools could do this in local parks to teach children and young people the consequences of littering and to try and encourage them not to do this.

### **Resident 27**

I think that big increases in the numbers of people cycling can only come from big increases in safety for cyclists. I see two main ways to achieve this --

1: separation of motor traffic from cyclists and pedestrians.

2: much lower traffic speeds -- at least 20mph.

Separation of motor traffic and cyclists means cycle lanes with physical barriers to keep heavy traffic out. It means closing roads to create traffic free or very low speed traffic areas. These closures can be achieved by bollards across the road (see what has been done in Hackney and Tower Hamlets) it does not need to be expensive.

Residential areas can be managed so that they are used by residents only with only one entry and exit point with no through route for motorised traffic. The resulting slow speeds and drastic traffic reduction opens the streets for children to play on again and gives beginners the confidence to start cycling. Telegraph Hill in New Cross is a good example. Council estates have often been given this treatment. It should be extended to areas of private dwellings so that more people can benefit.

The traffic which passes through Southwark is a blight (smelly, polluting and dangerous). It is not beneficial to our borough. We cannot manage that proportion on TfL's trunk roads. However, rat runs should be stopped up and through traffic curbed, blocked and discouraged on roads which are Southwark's responsibility. This would be beneficial to the health and safety of our children and all our citizens.

### **Resident 28**

I am an experienced and confident cyclist, while my wife is the opposite but an enthusiastic convert to commuter cycling of late. We both have very mixed experiences in Southwark, and have been dismayed by various decisions recently made by the council (designs on Peckham Rye, thankfully reversed decision to remove Heygate Street lane, apparent decision to drop cycle lanes).

All the evidence from Southwark and TfL research, and from surveys I've carried out in East Dulwich, points to one overriding barrier to more widespread adoption of the bicycle: fears about safety.

I should like you to look at four steps to address this:

#### **1. Reduce speeds**

So long as the council continues to leave, or force, cyclists in the main stream of traffic moving at 30mph, you will fail to get widespread adoption. Confident men (on the whole) such as myself will be happy to do this, but my wife is constantly on the verge of giving up when she tries to overtake parked buses on Rye Lane that then pull out into her.

Southwark has a 20mph policy, which is a great start. The council needs to make sure that all sections of cycle routes are 20mph, and really push TfL hard about nonsense like 30mph through the town centres of Peckham and Camberwell.

## **2. Give cyclists clear, separate road space**

Currently the council is all sixes and sevens on where cyclists should be. For example, here's a one mile stretch of my daily commute:

Heading south from Peckham Library... one minute we're on a contraflow semi-shared space at the top of Rye Lane negotiating our way with pedestrians who don't notice it's a cycle lane because the surface is hard to distinguish and oncoming cyclists who have only this option overtake parked buses, then we move into the stream of traffic on Rye Lane where we all weave around buses and unloading lorries, then we have traffic lights with no Advanced Stop Line, then past Tesco Metro we're off onto another difficult-to-spot semi-shared space with pedestrians, then we come out onto a cycle lane blocked by a bus stop half way down, then we have traffic lights with an ASL, then we're back into the stream of traffic. All in the space of a mile or so.

Where does the council want us to go? Where should motorists expect to find us? Often road danger is created when they're confused and we don't behave as they expect, and pedestrians get annoyed for the same reason.

If you look at any city in the world with high cycling figures, they share one feature in common: they give cyclists their *own* road space. Not shared with pedestrians, not a 1m advisory cycle lane that is poorly maintained. A physically separated, protected, wide cycle lane.

I would like to see Southwark adopt this as the option of choice, removing car parking and car lanes, making roads one way and - where they are occasionally wider than they need to be - narrowing pavements to achieve this. Whatever it takes. Other cities do it, why should we suffer?

## **3. Make it easier and quicker to cycle**

Close off roads, or sections, and put in bollards so cyclists can get through while cars can't. Southwark has done this in places, but I'd like to see a strategic approach to making it difficult to drive kids to school, etc. when cycling is potentially such a good option.

Put in cycle contraflow lanes or signage on all one way streets, and take our car parking where it makes this potentially dangerous or confusing as on Bermondsey Street.

All the while make sure that inexperienced cyclists *feel* safe, so it is quicker *and* more pleasant. Cycle south down Bermondsey Street at night with taxis and vans coming at you and tell me it's pleasant!

## **4. Enforce the rules of the road**

Work with the borough commander and safer neighbourhood teams to do as much if not more enforcement to protect cyclists (and pedestrians) as they do to crack down on antisocial and dangerous cycling.

Regular actions by Advanced Stop Lines in places like Tower Bridge Road and Old Kent Road to stop motorists and motorcyclists driving into them, please.

Average speed cameras and occasional speed gun work on cycle route roads like Glengall Road that are supposedly 20mph but with frequent speeding.

All of these concerns have been widely shared on the Southwark Cyclists' e-list, and chime with the London Cycling Campaign members' recent decision to adopt "go Dutch" as their campaign for the 2012 GLA elections. I would encourage you to read their web content: <http://lcc.org.uk/pages/go-dutch>

I don't think any of this is too much to ask, and much of it is just about starting out with different principles whenever the council does any road engineering scheme or policing plan.

I should also like our cabinet to make a bit of noise when TfL block them because of the current Mayor of London's appalling "smoothing traffic flow" policies.

**We have also received responses from a number of community groups with a particular interest in environmental issues:**

### **LIVING STREETS**

*A group of 80 activists 'committed to making life in Southwark better for those on foot'.*

Encouraging more sustainable travel: we believe that increased levels of walking can have tremendous benefits for Southwark and its residents.

While conditions for walking have improved enormously in recent years, we believe that more is needed to deliver the potential health, well-being, and economic benefits that walking can offer to Southwark.

We also recommend 20mph speed limits for all town centres. This has the potential to transform the way people feel about the balance between themselves as pedestrians and their relationship with motorists. Although Southwark is nominally a 20mph borough, more needs to be done to make all our town centres genuinely 20mph places.

At present our town centres and main roads are where the greatest dangers and threats exist to pedestrians from motor vehicles. If our town centres become places where vehicles move at a maximum of 20mph, it is a well established fact that there will be significant economic benefits to the local area and a greater proportion of local spending power will remain in the area.

Main roads are now the location of the vast majority of road casualties in Southwark. Serious work is needed to reduce speeds on them and in many places to reduce their capacity (as has been done very successfully on Southwark Park Road).

Roads such as Newington Causeway and Camberwell Road are relics of a totally different era of road and street design. Their capacity needs to be reduced so that people can feel a part of them once again. Roads that are designed for motor vehicles have no pedestrians. Almost nobody walks from the Elephant & Castle to the river, even though it takes just 15 minutes.

Southwark's Transport for London (TfL) roads are of course a major problem. In an urban setting like Southwark they cannot solely play a role to facilitate through traffic; people need to be able to walk to work or shop on them, and also to simply spend time there. They need to function as places as well as transport routes. We notice that even the City of London is now considering 20mph limits on its TfL roads.

'Green routes' and 'play streets' in residential areas: in Southwark, children need places to play; people need to populate the outdoors and streets. Streets should no longer be

corridors for motor vehicles or places where they are parked. We need to get people outside and using their streets more. 'Green Links' is an initiative to link up green and open spaces with largely traffic-free routes. 'Play streets' allow children once again to play in the streets in front of their homes. Getting people outside and taking possession of the streets where they live has all kinds of other benefits including health and exercise, social cohesion and community safety, as far less crime occurs in well-populated places. Such policies go with the grain of declining car ownership and car usage in Southwark and allow the majority - in the form of pedestrians and residents - a far fairer share of the streets we all inhabit.

'Walk-able neighbourhoods': it is vital that we design our borough around walking. Key to this is having shops and services within walking distance. Our local shopping parades should be supported to ensure people have basic goods within walking distance and positive measures taken to encourage walk-ability and encourage the shops on local parades. This offers significant benefits in places with high levels of deprivation and during economically difficult times. If people no longer have to afford the £6,000 per year it currently costs to own and run car, that's a very significant saving.

*Submitted on behalf of Living Streets.*

## **PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF SOUTHWARK**

*A community group committed to 'networking, information and skills sharing, to promote increased spending and best environmental practices'.*

### **Question 1: How can we promote energy efficiency - not just in buildings owned by the council - but in all properties?**

Establish CO2 tariff for all major businesses and retailers, to encourage less vehicle pollution, product packaging waste, out-of-hours energy waste etc. Provide continuous training and support to all local businesses and retailers to cut down their CO2 emissions (to include dedicated cycle access, establishing of distribution centres etc).

Simplify and facilitate installation of wind turbines across all council property and all new builds. Establish district heating systems across the whole of Southwark.

### **Question 2: How can we further encourage people to recycle?**

Establish food and garden composting facilities at all council housing.

### **Question 3: How can we encourage more sustainable travel, especially cycling and walking?**

With immediate effect, set up a 'Car Free Day' once a month for three months. After the initial three-month period introduce 'Car Free Sundays' every week (with access for pedestrians, cyclists and emergency vehicles only). Review after a year of 'Car Free Sundays'. Pedestrianise large parts of Southwark (non-Transport for London roads) for pedestrian/cycle/emergency vehicle use only. Adopt 20mph limit across the whole of Southwark. Limit HGV transit to licensed essential HGV during the day and overnight allow any HGV. Introduce closures of residential roads for play one evening per week. Establish 'clear way finding' for a network of borough cycling routes, using on road markings to navigate on quieter streets.

Area specific: Insist Heygate Estate is redeveloped as a car-free area (10% maximum provision). Insist on provision of an eastern bypass of the Elephant and Castle through the Heygate redevelopment.

**Question 4: Given the huge reductions in the council's budget this year and in the coming years, how can the council further protect the public realm, Southwark's parks and green spaces by encouraging people to respect and care for their local environment?**

Simplify public space management procedures so that residents wishing to engage in food growing/gardening/management of any one space (park/green and amenity areas around council housing) can do so without wasting years of their time going through council funding programmes and other hoops. Minimise the council's management of and involvement with Cleaner Greener Safer projects as it is costly, not terribly efficient, and time consuming.

Resist demolition of existing property and instead open up empty properties to community use, to include housing, by providing a clear, transparent, and easy to understand and implement Community Asset Transfer policy, to enable easier access and management by local residents and communities.

Consider lower rents for the first year for community groups using council property. High rents mean many properties are standing empty and costing money for security and repairs.

*Submitted on behalf The People's Republic of Southwark.*

#### **THE ELEPHANT BY-PASS GROUP**

*A 51-member local lobby 'whose proposals have been adopted as part of the policy of Southwark Cyclists'.*

Firstly, we'd like to raise the urgent need to see a fast, safe, and direct cycling bypass of the Elephant & Castle junction included in its redevelopment plans.

We believe that the developers of the Heygate Estate have been resistant to providing the dedicated cycling route that we see as essential for reducing the horrendous casualty rate for cyclists at the Elephant and Castle. Proposals detailed to me by Transport for London for the redevelopment of the junction do not solve the essential problem of the roundabout being one of the largest real and perceived risks to cycling safety in London.

Southwark can lead the way to resolving this by insisting on a fast, direct and safe off road cycling alternative to the junction - as part of the redevelopment of Heygate Street, and at no cost to the Borough.

On recycling: Southwark's recycling scheme for flats with bin rooms is very good. However, there is a lack of clarity on what I can and cannot recycle and I frequently have arguments with my flatmate about it! This could be made clearer, with guidance on what to do if in doubt. I also note that our recycling bins are black and our waste bins are green. This is totally counter intuitive and we have a problem communicating the correct bins to uninterested neighbours.

On sustainable travel: 'Way-finding' is a huge problem for cycling in Southwark. The LCN (London Cycle Network) routes are not sufficiently clear and are very hard to follow. Some great thinking is being done on this matter and I'd encourage Southwark to lead the way on experimenting with better signage and on-street markings. Many one way roads block desired routes. From my own home, it's impossible to legally cycle from the Cycle Super Highway, due to a 5m section of one way road. Many of these can be converted at minimal cost with 'except cycles' signs.

Children don't see the streets as a place where they belong. This is reinforced by parenting and schools treating 'walking' as a risk. A realistic attitude to any element of risk needs to be

taken, with measures to introduce more 'pedestrian priority' home-zones made easier. Southwark should introduce means to allow one evening per week closures of residential roads for play.

(Follow this link for an example: <http://www.slideshare.net/liveablelondon/movement-for-liveable-london-street-talks-adrian-voce-6th-december-2011>).

One of the major blocks to pleasant cycling and walking in Southwark is on- street parking. The council should seek to reduce this and issue fewer permits, particularly in the constrained central area. On-street parking on the Cycle Superhighway route through Eliot's Row is a good example of a location where parking and single yellow lines should be removed. Another place where parking enforcement is urgently needed is on Southwark Bridge Road, where unnecessary parking ruins an otherwise very good section of cycle route.

Giving local people ownership and input is the best way to encourage respect for the public realm. This needs to be backed up with an effective and responsive environment and streets department so we can resolve problems quickly. I frequently report issues using the 'fixmystreet' website, or by direct email and get no response or else a response and then no action.

*Submitted on behalf of The Elephant Bypass Group.*

#### **THE SE5 FORUM**

*'A grassroots, non-political, umbrella organisation that exists to work for the improvement of Camberwell to benefit all members of its diverse community'.*

In response to this question: "Given the huge reductions in the council's budget this year and in the coming years, how can the council further protect the public realm, Southwark's parks and green spaces by encouraging people to respect and care for their local environment?"

SE5 Forum for Camberwell has launched The Friends of Camberwell Green (Inaugural General Meeting, 7pm Monday 30 January 2012, St Giles Centre, Camberwell Church St, London SE5 8RB - ALL WELCOME) and would look to the council to support this group in principle and in kind to create a strong, coherent community voice for the betterment of Camberwell Green.

The council could encourage and 'grow' community parks and green spaces involvement through supporting the networking of interested groups. This support could provide opportunities for sharing experience, information and best practice and this, in turn, could lead to strengthened community 'ownership' of our parks and green spaces.

*Submitted by the Chair on behalf of the SE5 Forum.*

#### **FRIENDS OF BURGESS PARK**

The Friends of Burgess Park support Southwark Council's goal to get more communities involved in looking after parks and green spaces. We suggest that one way to do this is to have regular volunteering days in parks and work with Friends groups and other interested organisations to do this. Getting the best out of volunteers requires a programme of work and volunteer co-ordination this would be a good investment for the Council. Further involvement of the community in parks and green spaces will require a partnership approach where responsibilities and commitments are agreed and understood for example between the Friends group and the Council. When we as a Friends group have raised funds

for a project in the park we will need to work in partnership with the Council to deliver this. As a Friends group we are not able - at the moment - to take on long - term responsibilities. We would welcome a partnership approach with the Council which supports Friends groups and others to take on more involvement in the park over the next few years. To take this further the Council need to discuss how they want involvement to develop and what the Council want it to deliver.

Are the Council able to provide park budgets for the next two to three years?

Does the Council want to develop volunteering activity in parks and green spaces?

How can the Council support Friends groups to do more?

How can the Council support social enterprise to deliver services in parks?

*Submitted on behalf of Friends of Burgess Park*