

Active Travel Projects Update Report

For Joint Transportation Board on 2 October 2023

Summary

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Classification:	Public document (non-exempt)
Wards Affected:	Speldhurst & Bidborough, Rusthall, Culverden, Park, Pantiles & St Marks, St John's, St James', Sherwood, Southborough & High Brooms

For Information

1. This paper provides an update on two Active Travel projects that TWBC and KCC are working on together, funded by Active Travel England.
2. This paper is for information only.

1. Introduction and background

1.1 In 2022 Tunbridge Wells Borough Council submitted a number of projects to Kent County Council (KCC) to be considered for Active Travel England (ATE) funding in. Two projects Tunbridge Wells projects were selected for submission by KCC and awarded funding by ATE as follows:

- Langton-Rusthall-Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Centre Cycle Route Design
- Better Streets Pilot Project for St John's and St James' Areas Community Engagement and Design

1.2 The progress on each of these projects to date is outlined below.

2. Langton-Rusthall-Town Centre Cycle Route Design

2.1 This project is funded through Active Travel England's Capability Fund which is aimed at providing support for planning cycling and walking networks and/or route design.

2.2 The route linking Langton Green – Rusthall – Royal Tunbridge Wells town centre was included in the Tunbridge Wells Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) Phase 1 which was published as part of the evidence base for the Submitted Local Plan.

2.3 Consultants have been appointed to prepare a design for the route that would enable TWBC/KCC to apply for future Active Travel Funding to implement the route proposals.

2.4 Initial engagement meetings have or will been held with local stakeholders including the Commons Conservators, Speldhurst and Rusthall Parish Councils, Royal Tunbridge Wells Town Forum and Tunbridge Wells Bicycle Users Group.

2.5 The consultants are now assessing route options before moving onto the design phase of the project.

2.6 The estimated completion date for the project is December 2023.

3. Better Streets for St John's and St James' Areas

- 3.1 This project is funded through Active Travel England's Tranche 4 which funds both the development of designs for, and the delivery of, cycling and walking infrastructure.
- 3.2 The Council regularly receives feedback from residents about traffic-related issues affecting them in the streets in which they live and further work is required to understand these issues and develop options to create more pleasant streets for all users.
- 3.3 A pilot study area was identified as part of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan Phase 2, which was published as part of the evidence base for the Submission Local Plan. The study area covers mainly the wards of St John's and St James' but also smaller parts of Culverden, Park, Sherwood and Southborough & High Brooms.
- 3.4 A Working Group comprising Councillors and local residents has been formed to support the project.
- 3.5 As an initial phase of the project, TWBC has undertaken a comprehensive engagement with residents to understand their everyday experiences of moving through the study area.
- 3.6 The engagement resulted in a total of 581 participants responding to a survey and/or a map to pinpoint specific locations of concern. The headline issues identified included speeding traffic, parking issues and a poor street environment.
- 3.7 Consultants have now been appointed to work with TWBC to undertake further community engagement and develop design options for improvement schemes or measures that are supported by the community.
- 3.8 As with the previous project, the aim is to put TWBC in a more advanced state of preparation to bid for further Active Travel England funding to implement agreed schemes or measures.
- 3.9 The estimated completion date for this project is December 2023.

4. Recommended Course of Action

- 4.1 That Members of the JTB note the information in this paper.
- 4.2 That a further report on these projects is brought to the January meeting of the JTB.