

**ANNUAL STATEMENT OF THE ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORT COUNCILLOR
CHAMPION 2024/25**

Councillor Tony Froud

Alternative Transport Councillor Champion

As an experienced road and off-road cyclist, over many years, I see my role as alternative transport champion as not only promoting the benefits of cycling but also encouraging the use of borough and district walking and cycling facilities. I've engaged with formal groups, social groups, and other members, to encourage their use and enable improvements of these resources.

I am a member of several different cycling groups and a keen solo cyclist and have engaged on a social level, in arranging tours using the around the borough bike ride. The "Around the borough bike ride" is an all-weather, walking and cycling route outlining the perimeter of the Borough. It takes in Natures reserves at Horton, Epsom common and the Hogsmill, as well as Nonsuch Park and Epsom Downs. Of particular interest is the recently completed Chamber Mead Wetland conservation works along the Hogsmill river, where 80 species of birds have now been identified and the scarce Bearded Reeling has now been observed for the first time. The route promotes the green spaces and environmental biodiversity of Epsom and Ewell at its absolute finest, and I would urge all readers of this report to sample the mental health and conservation benefits, this route provides.

In engaging with County councillors, I have also sought to further promote, where appropriate, the economic benefits of recreational walking and cycling to local communities. This has brought in visitors and revenues to support local business and catering outlets, who benefit from the increased footfall. Brought to prominence by the 2012 Olympics, Boxhill is a great example of this. It is now on the map as a nationally renowned centre for Cycling Enthusiast. Bringing in riders from all over the region to experience the challenging rides and beautiful scenery, providing an additional boost to the local economy.

In addition to the local cycling routes, that I am aware of since taking on the role of Alternative transport Champion, I have also attended the engagement sessions initiated by Surrey County Council, to support the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. LCWIP is a ten-year national plan, designed to focus on strategic network connections within each district and aims to create wider walking and cycling networks within the boroughs. Improving accessibility to key destinations such as shops, transport hubs and places of work, each LCWIP will identify where to prioritise investments, to create and enhance these walking and cycling networks. Incorporating the objectives of safety, directness, comfort, attractiveness, and adaptability to make these networks as usable as possible.

Pedestrian access is of a high importance to residents. The maintenance of pavements and footways is of particular concern, as issues of safety can emerge if repairs are overlooked. I have determined, by engaging with Surrey County councillors, that pedestrian facilities are given the highest priority. By ensuring repairs are logged and implemented and improving pedestrian access to encourage their usage, the results can only have a positive effect of the Boroughs carbon footprint. By liaising with Surrey councillors, I have ensured that resources can be directed to the most pressing of cases. As a pertinent theme, SCC can maintain 100 meters of pavement for every 1 meter of road surface

Funding for Pavements across the borough will usually derive from SCC's capital maintenance budget. The funding for each project will depend on the repair option chosen. For instance, replacing paving slabs will often require more investment than a bitumen tarmac or slurry mix replacement. It is therefore Important to identify the correct repair option at a local level, where an input from an alternative transport perspective, can be invaluable. In addition, where viable, the implementation of joint Cycling/Pedestrian Footways without this input, can create conflicts of interest.

Public transport, although not necessarily considered alternative transport, can often influence, or affect it. For this reason, I've chosen to include certain aspects of it in this report:

Bus – As a resident of Langley Vale, I am constantly aware of the inconveniences of a challenging bus service. I have therefore promoted the benefits of more frequent and accessible bus services, to the wellbeing of the borough. I've attended neighbourhood and transport forums and worked with local and Surrey councillors to progress service improvements.

Train - Epsom is a key hub with great connectivity into London with Southwest Trains and Southern Trains. Attending the forums provided by the train companies and working with fellow borough councillors to effectively lobby for increased frequency of peak time trains and to bring greater train capacity back to Epsom to reflect pre-COVID service levels. As a Stoneleigh Councillor, I've taken a keen interest to the Improvements of Stoneleigh Station. Step free access have now been provided and thanks to the efforts of Local Councillor Hannah Dalton, we keenly await its official opening in the new year. In addition, I've also subscribed to the South Western Railway Stakeholders circulation and have been constantly updated with developments.

As a committee member of the Stoneleigh and Auriol Neighbourhood Forum, I have been involved with drafting of the Borough's only neighbourhood plan. This is a comprehensive report that sets out to provide guidelines to planners when considering planning applications from developers and as such, sits within, and aligns to, the local plan. In consultation with other committee members and Planning Officers, SANF has set out Policy Guidelines relating to the Plan's Transport section. Here it defines that:

- All new multi-residency developments should provide an area for cycle storage, which should be easy to use and conveniently located.
- All other developments will include cycle parking spaces, in accordance with Local Plan standards.
- The sections community guidelines set out the measures the plan should priorities. From an Alternative Transport viewpoint these include:
- Improvements to footpaths, alleyways, and roads, ensuring surfaces are smooth and hazard free.
- Improvements to walking and cycling routes, linking the neighbourhood to nearby parks, villages, and town centres.
- The creation of new dedicated cycle lanes and routes, where appropriate.
- Improvements to public transport with more frequent buses to Worcester Park and Epsom and more frequent trains, returning the services to at least the pre covid levels.

In General Terms, my role has involved engaging with Interest groups, forums, Local authorities, and different stake holder groups to promote and contribute to the many varied aspects of alternative transport. In specific terms, I've consulting with borough and Surrey Councillors, and Officers, to firstly understand stakeholder requirements and then to formulate, promote and progress any necessities that may emerge