

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**

**LOCAL COMMITTEE (GUILDFORD)**

**DATE: 13 June 2018**



**LEAD OFFICER: Becky Willson, Transport Planner: Cycling**

**SUBJECT: Guildford-Godalming Greenway**

**DIVISION: Guildford South East, Shalford**

**SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

The Godalming Cycle Campaign (GCC) in partnership with the Guildford Bicycle Users Group (G-Bug) have developed plans for a 'greenway' along the River Wey corridor.

The spine of the route will run between Guildford town centre and Godalming but it also includes an extension to Milford and links to other key destinations along it.

The route is suitable for all ages and abilities so it would be safe, quiet and away from busy roads. It will be inclusive for others such as wheelchair users and parents with pushchairs. It would make many local journeys more attractive for walking and cycling.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**The Local Committee (Guildford) is asked to agree that:**

- (i) The Guildford-Godalming Greenway route (as detailed in Annex B) is adopted into the Guildford Cycle Plan.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The Guildford-Godalming Greenway Proposal is a detailed and well-considered report. It has been produced by local residents who regularly travel along the corridor and has involved all the relevant local cycle groups.

The Surrey Cycling Strategy (2014-2026) invites local involvement to the local cycle plans and the aims of the Guildford-Godalming Greenway supports the objectives of the strategy.

Many of the sections identified for improvement have already been noted under the cycle plans for Guildford and Waverley. The proposal ties them all together under a strategic route which can be implemented in sections as and when opportunities are available.

The vision is to provide a route that a wide variety of users could comfortably share including pedestrians, cyclists, wheelchair users, and parents with pushchairs. By

providing attractive alternatives to driving all will benefit from reduced pollution and congestion and walking and cycling provides many health benefits to the individual.

## **1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:**

- 1.1 The Surrey Cycling Strategy recognises the health, pollution and congestion reduction benefits of encouraging a shift away from personal motorised transport. A good quality cycling network also enables transport for those who are unable, or chose not, to use a motorised vehicle. As such the aim of the strategy is more people cycling in Surrey, more safely.
- 1.2 Under the cycling strategy local cycle plans have been developed for Guildford and Waverley to identify missing infrastructure and support cycling locally.
- 1.3 The Godalming Cycle Campaign (GCC) have developed a proposal called the Guildford-Godalming Greenway in support of the cycling strategy, and to encourage more provision for walking and cycling.
- 1.4 Many people travel on the corridor between Guildford and Godalming for work, school, shopping and leisure. According to census data 3,840 people commute for work daily between Guildford and Godalming. Of these only 50 cycle while 2,957 chose to drive. It is a relatively flat five miles between the two towns; a distance most people could easily cycle in about 30 minutes.
- 1.5 The combined population of the towns and villages served by the route is over 150,000. As well as residential areas there are train stations, bus routes, shops, businesses and leisure activities. Many shorter journeys would also be made along the Greenway.
- 1.6 Some of the route is already in place with paths that permit cycling as well as walking. However the quality of these paths renders them less than ideal and, in some places, there are issues that actively deter their use by bike or with pushchairs. The existing facilities also do not provide a continuous route.
- 1.7 The Guildford-Godalming Proposal from GCC presents a plan for improving the existing paths and joining them up to provide continuity. A considerable amount of work has gone into the proposal and the executive summary is attached as Annex A. By adopting the proposal into the local cycle plans we are recognising it as a key route and supporting the local residents who want it and will use it.

## **2. ANALYSIS:**

- 2.1 The aim of the Guildford-Godalming Greenway is to provide a well-designed route suitable for day to day activities such as getting to school, going shopping, commuting to work, or walking or cycling for leisure. The route is designed to be accessible to a small family group, out together on bikes. If this 'yard-stick' is adopted the greenway will automatically be of a standard appropriate to a wide range of users.
- 2.2 While the route has been selected with utility in mind, most of it passes through scenic landscape making it suitable for leisure as well. However it is not intended that this should be a route for cycling at speed. Fast routes for commuting by bike may be better provided separately.

- 2.3 An objective of the Surrey Cycling Strategy is to make cycling a safe, attractive and convenient mode of transport for people of all ages and levels of confidence. For this it lists five design principles to ensure that new infrastructure is of high quality, drawing from national and international best practice. They are:
- Inclusive
  - Safe and secure
  - Comfortable and well maintained
  - Continuous
  - Go where people want to go
- 2.4 Walking and cycling are by their nature more **inclusive** for most as a form of transport. You don't need to be a certain age, pass a test or buy a car or ticket. A well designed and implemented route will provide inclusive access for many users such as older and young cyclists, pedestrians, wheelchair users, and parents with pushchairs.
- 2.5 Many people find road traffic intimidating and are discouraged from walking and cycling as a result. Parents are understandably reluctant to allow their children to cycle on or near busy roads. The provision of a well-designed and largely off-road route will offer a protected and suitable environment in which children and those who are less confident can be **safe and secure**.
- 2.6 As a utility route it should be **comfortable and well maintained**. It should not be prone to flooding or be reduced to mud after rain. Users should expect to be able to use it in ordinary, everyday clothing without arriving at their destination dirty. The surface should be relatively firm and flat. A loose or rutted surface greatly increases the effort required to cycle and can unseat the inattentive or inexperienced. A poor surface makes cycling particularly difficult for children riding bikes with smaller wheels. The standard of construction should follow recognised guidelines.
- 2.7 It is vital that the route is **continuous**. Stopping and starting is the most difficult aspect of cycling and so a route that allows people on bikes to keep going is important. This is amplified for families where parents face the additional challenge of managing children at every stop. The quality of the route should also be continuous, i.e. a user should expect a similar standard of provision throughout the route and not be faced with a section on a busy stretch of road part way along their journey.
- 2.8 As a key corridor this route will clearly **go where people want to go**. It will run close to a significant population, linking homes to many destinations such as shops, schools, leisure facilities and public transport while still taking a direct route.
- 2.9 Following these principles GCC have assessed the route in the proposal and given a red, amber, green status for each section depending on the level of intervention required to bring it up to standard. This can be seen on the map in Annex A.
- 2.10 The detail on each section, including links, is considered at length in the GCC Proposal. To keep the length of this report down this has not been attached in full however is available upon request. SCC officers including the Highways team have also gone through each section of the report and provided

additional comments based on their experience and expertise. This table, which includes the suggestions from the GCC proposal, is attached as Annex B.

### **3. OPTIONS:**

- 3.1 In determining the most appropriate route between Guildford and Godalming many alternatives were scrutinised. The route suggested in Annex B has been selected because it is most suitable for the target audience and best connects with adjacent sections to form a continuous route that should be achievable if funding is available.
- 3.2 Alternatives often represent the desire lines for different audiences, either faster, on-road commuters or off-road riders using cycles suited to rougher terrain. In future it may be appropriate to develop some of the alternative options to make them more accessible for cycling in its various forms.
- 3.3 At a detailed design stage it may be that slight routing changes need to be made. However any changes would be in keeping with the aim to provide a direct, safe and attractive route for all ages and abilities.

### **4. CONSULTATIONS:**

- 4.1 The Surrey Cycling Strategy was fully consulted on when it was developed. The Guildford Cycle Plan is available online at [www.travelsmartsurrey.info](http://www.travelsmartsurrey.info). This includes a link to an anonymous survey where comments or suggestions can be left on any aspect of the cycle plan.

### **5. FINANCIAL AND VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS:**

- 5.1 Providing all the necessary works on the Guildford-Godalming Greenway will require considerable capital investment. No funding has yet been allocated to any of the improvements.
- 5.2 However the route has been broken down into sections, with detail on what is required at each, to make it easier to identify sources of funding and construct in a piecemeal approach.
- 5.3 Possible sources of funding may involve developer contributions/CIL or bids to the Local Enterprise Partnership, DfT, or other grant bodies.
- 5.4 The Local Committee may choose to fund some improvements where there are lower costs involved.

### **6. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS:**

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken for the Surrey Cycling Strategy.

### **7. LOCALISM:**

- 7.1 The Guildford-Godalming Greenway will provide a safe, attractive and useful route for those who live or travel in the vicinity. Increased walking and cycling has benefits to the health of the participants and encourages self-reliance. It helps to reduce traffic congestion and will reduce carbon emissions where it replaces other motorised transport.
- 7.2 As the 'tube-style' map in Annex A shows, the main route has a potential to serve a population of over 150,000 people living within a mile or so of the route.
- 7.3 When complete the route will result in improved accessibility to Guildford and Godalming town centres as well as other key destinations and residential areas along the route.

## **8. OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Crime and Disorder	No significant implications arising from this report
Sustainability (including Climate Change and Carbon Emissions)	Set out below.
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant implications arising from this report
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	No significant implications arising from this report
Public Health	Set out below.

### 8.1 Sustainability implications

Increasing levels of walking and cycling can have a positive impact in congestion reduction and a consequent reduction in carbon emissions.

The creation of an attractive greenway connecting residential areas with key destinations will encourage modal shift which has implications for health, improved mobility, accessibility and reduced dependency on private vehicles.

### 8.2 Public Health implications

Active travel (walking and cycling), particularly for utility trips such as travelling to work, school and shopping, is considered a key deliverable against public health priorities such as obesity and air quality. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Guidance – Physical Activity: Walking and Cycling states that walking and cycling reduces the risk of heart disease, stroke, cancer, obesity and type 2 diabetes. It can help keep the musculoskeletal system healthy and promote mental wellbeing.

## **9. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 9.1 The Guildford-Godalming Greenway has the potential to be a safe and attractive route for a variety of users that also provides an alternative to driving.

- 9.2 It is recommended that the Local Committee adopt the Guildford-Godalming Greenway route (as detailed in Annex B) into the Guildford Cycle Plan.

**10. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:**

- 10.1 If the recommendation is agreed the Guildford-Godalming Greenway will form a part of the Guildford Local Cycle Plan. It will be an annex to the plan and will be viewable online at [www.travelsmartsurry.info](http://www.travelsmartsurry.info). Opportunities for funding will continue to be sought to make the relevant improvements to complete the route.

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**Contact Officer:**

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**Consulted:**

Guildford and Waverley local ward and divisional councillors  
Guildford and Waverley officers  
Godalming Cycle Campaign  
Waverley Cycle Forum  
G-BUG

**Annexes:**

Annex A: A Guildford to Godalming Greenway: Executive Summary  
Annex B: The Guildford-Godalming Greenway route with SCC comments

**Sources/background papers:**

A Guildford to Godalming Greenway: Executive Summary  
A Guildford to Godalming Greenway: Proposal  
A Guildford to Godalming Greenway: Alternative route assessments  
A Guildford to Godalming Greenway: Index to maps  
Surrey Cycling Strategy 2014-2026  
Surrey Cycling Strategy Equality Impact Assessment  
Census data

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