

Dear All,

I hope that you are well.

Apologies for such a long email. I am writing to you because you are a representative of your local residents' association or other stakeholder group, or because you have been in touch with Cllr Richard Leeming and me in relation to the council's response to the COVID19 emergency. Please feel free to share this email with anyone who may be interested.

Most of you will by now have had time to have a look at details of the [temporary COVID19 emergency highways measures for Southwark](#) that I circulated to Residents' Association representatives last Friday, including the details of the [first wave of measures in Dulwich Village Ward](#). In summary, these consist of a **temporary closure** to motor traffic of the Dulwich Village/Court Lane/Calton Avenue junction. This is likely to be carried out within approximately 6 weeks. We are currently monitoring traffic at a number of locations throughout the area and this will continue in order to understand the impact of measures introduced and identify areas where further temporary interventions are required. The aim is not to shift motor traffic from one road to another, but to reduce it over all.

The background is that the government and TfL have called upon councils to implement emergency measures focussed on encouraging walking and cycling in response to reduced capacity on public transport, in order to assist people to return to their usual activities post-lockdown. To qualify for funding, measures must be quick and cost effective; they include interventions to assist social distancing in areas of high footfall, school streets and pop-up cycle lanes. There is plenty of information available in the main stream media and details of the government guidance are available [here](#).

This announcement comes hot on the heels of the Our Healthy Streets Dulwich consultation that has been ongoing in Dulwich Village for over a year. Whilst the timing is coincidental, it means that some of the ground work has already been done and we have a good overview of community sentiment. Phase 3 of the consultation ended on 31<sup>st</sup> March with over 2,000 responses. I believe that this is the biggest response to a single ward consultation in Southwark's history and reflects the extensive level of public engagement achieved, through numerous events including large public meetings, street stalls, addressing groups of children and parents in schools, addressing Residents' Associations, meeting small groups in living rooms and door to door leafleting and discussion. A full analysis is not yet available, however, in anticipation of local interest following the announcement above, we asked officers for an overview of consultation responses in relation to this specific measure.

**We can now confirm that the vast majority of responses received were from within or immediately adjacent to the consultation area and that 55% of respondents agreed with the proposal to close the Dulwich Village/Calton**

**Avenue/Court Lane junction to motor traffic, versus 37% who disagreed with this proposal .**

In recent weeks, Southwark, like many London Councils, has been carrying out a consultation exercise using the [Commonplace](#) platform to identify areas of the borough where residents would like to see short term interventions taking place and to date there have been more than 3000 responses from across the borough. The same officers who were due to be analysing the results of the OHSD consultation are now instead working night and day to focus on this new priority and have therefore not had any further time to work on the analysing the OHSD consultation responses. Resources both at TfL and within the council are extremely scarce and we are not sure when this work will resume.

The government's call for emergency measures is a recognition that the majority of households in London (over 60% in Southwark) do not have access to a car. This includes lots of key workers who usually travel by public transport, many of whom will need to find different ways of commuting. At the same time, if everyone who does own a car starts to use it in place of public transport, current projections show that we will soon see traffic volumes increase to significantly above their pre-C19 lockdown levels: our roads will become even more dangerously polluted and unsafe for everyone, especially for anyone wishing travel by alternative means. It stands to reason that if we provide safe walking and cycling routes through Dulwich, children and adults alike will use them and this will, in turn, play a crucial part in reducing the over all burden of motor traffic, both on our our community and beyond.

Richard and I understand that views are mixed and that some residents will be happier than others with these changes. We will continue to work tirelessly to engage with our entire community in a transparent fashion, regardless of the views expressed. Meanwhile, whatever your views, we would ask you to take on board the information above, the magnitude of the task we face and our absolutely heartfelt desire to achieve the best outcome for all.

Stay well.

Warm regards  
Margy

**Margy Newens**

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