

Transport Panel Report to the AGM

This article describes the presentation made to the Weybridge Society AGM on Monday 19th April 2010. The article supports detailed presentations on the 4 key strategies described; these are also available on this website in PDF format.

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Introduction

*Weybridge – in so many ways is a town shaped by the railway on which still so many residents and visitors rely! However because most of our roads were built before the railway came in 1838 and **Transport Infrastructure has not kept pace with the motor car or the town's population growth.** The town now suffers from excessive road traffic – including large volumes of private and commercial through traffic!*

The article summarises the views of the Transport Panel on specific transport policies we believe are necessary to protect our town and allow it to develop.

Vision

To maintain and improve our town we in Weybridge deserve a good vision and strategy – a clear and robust statement of how we want our town to look and feel in 20 years. Lack of vision will lead us on an uncertain path

We propose that Elmbridge, Surrey and partners **should create, support and deliver transport strategies and policies that provide, not only an adequate, but an excellent, transport infrastructure, addressing important issues such as:**

- **Road safety** - especially by reducing speeds, providing safe routes to schools / colleges and removing large HGV's from our local roads
- **Reduce emissions** - by making cycling, walking and public transport more attractive
- **Improve parking** - reduce the impact of parking on residents through a town-wide parking strategy
- **Improve transport mode integration** - especially at our most important transport hub - Weybridge Station

Weybridge Society Proposals

As our contribution to these strategies the Weybridge Society Transport Panel proposes **4 specific transport strategies (20mph, Cycling, Station and Parking) that we feel are an essential parts of how to make our town safer and a better place to live, capable of supporting, not only the current population, But future generations and incomers.**

[1] Speeding - reduce speeds on our residential roads with the introduction of 20mph limits or zones in all residential streets and ensure traffic adheres to the limits. The key objectives are to reduce accidents and encourage more walking and cycling.

The evidence for lower speed limits in residential streets is compelling – in a collision between cars and pedestrians at 30 mph ~20% of pedestrians hit by a car will die – that’s almost 10 times the rate at 20mph; *In a study of 400 20mph areas in London it was found that there was ~50% less ‘Killed and Serious Injuries’ and ~£20m saved in ‘social costs’ inc Hospitals. Implementation costs were lower than the savings! Evidence shows that properly designed 20mph limits and zones are ‘self enforcing’ i.e. require no additional police enforcement resource.*

Residents don’t feel safe walking or cycling - mainly due to high traffic speeds. We support the SCC/Police ‘Drive Smart’ initiative to tackle anti-social driving.

The latest SCC policy statement on 20mph limits suggests a ‘do nothing’ approach. WE INTEND TO CHALLENGE THIS ROBUSTLY

[2] Cycling– make cycling more attractive by the provision of better routes, facilities and safe zones for cyclists. Cycling is the main ‘sustainable’ transport mode – and the most cost effective way to provide infrastructure that will contribute to CO₂ reduction. Weybridge has almost no cycling provision.

Vision: Make cycling in Weybridge safe, convenient and enjoyable.

- **Safe** - Signage, road markings, advanced stop lines, off-road routes, lighting.
- **Convenient** - direct , continuous, minimised stops etc. and where people want/need to go.
- **Enjoyable** – Cycling is part of ‘making Weybridge a pleasant place to live’.

Strategy:

- **Link Weybridge** with neighbouring towns, public transport (inc Station), social, community and leisure amenities.
- **Make highways safer** for cyclists (e.g. cycle lanes and shared paths)

Link priorities are :

- *Within Weybridge* to create safe routes across town, to schools and the Station and to Brooklands.
- to create safe and convenient routes that *link Weybridge to our neighbouring towns* – e.g. to Cobham, Hersham and Byfleet and to leisure areas such as Wisley Commons and the Basingstoke canal

Safer Highways - Surrey has more traffic than anywhere else in the country. Competition for road space is intense and makes cycling dangerous and stressful. Marked cycle lanes help to raise awareness and give cyclists a little more room. Advanced stop lines give a head start at junctions and help right turns in particular.

Education - Motorists, Cyclists and Pedestrians need to be educated to *share!* Simple messages – e.g. paint bicycle symbols on the road surface over Walton and Chertsey Bridges, erect "SHARE THE ROAD" signs like they have in California, or erect shared path signs like in West Byfleet!

Such measures are not expensive but have a huge effect on safety, convenience and the pleasure of cycling, by providing a practical and cost effective way to deliver significant changes in support of sustainability, health and climate objectives.

[3] Station – improve road safety for all and better integrate rail/bus and other transport modes

Many residents work outside the town and many visit the town (students, tourists and employees) - **Weybridge Station is our ‘strategic transport hub’.**

The station developed in 1838 from the vision of our then Council. However, it is remote from the Weybridge Town and Brooklands’ businesses. The roads around the Station, designed for horse and cart traffic, have changed little in almost 175 years.

The station now needs to be improved and much better integrated with public transport and other modes. Key changes need to include:

- ✓ **Modernise and expand the station** - Expand station capacity, Provide better cycle storage and Provide escalators to platform
- ✓ **Improve highways near the Station.** - Re-locate the roundabout, Improve St George’s Ave junction, Make footpaths safe (especially to Schools), and Provide safe routes for cyclists
- ✓ **Integrate Public Transport** - Re-locate bus stands adjacent to station, Improve Bus services to/from the Station, Improve taxi rank and Link Weybridge to Heathrow - Air Track

We have developed an indicative scheme that meets **all** these objectives – and still produces *a net increase in public open space!* We will soon present this scheme to the railways and the council – for adoption as the **new vision.**

[4] Parking – provide appropriate parking schemes Vision: Adequate, safe and appropriate parking for residents, visitors and employees.

With the town layout, station location and limited public transport we still need cars and a place to park. Parking has to meet the legitimate needs of residents, visitors and employees. Parking issues must be resolved in a town wide and strategic context.

- **Town centre** - **enough** capacity to meet needs of residents, shoppers and employees; at the same time protecting neighbouring residential areas.
- **Station** – adequate capacity at affordable prices; nearby parking controls designed to make sustainable travel modes significantly more attractive.
- **Feeder Routes** – controlled parking to minimise congestion – protect 2 way traffic flows.

And finally

- **Residential Streets** – parking maximised for residents and their visitors.

Conclusions

The approach we propose does not require a prior commitment to high investment - now is not the time for that. What we do need first is a clear and strong vision.

Population growth of the town is not 'sustainable' without a proper transport infrastructure. Improvements must precede further development. The Council's present Core Strategy is inadequate - **WE WANT A STRONG AND CLEAR VISION.**

Certainly any change needs finance; but many things can be done without tax payer funded, investment.

- **Fund from existing budgets** – e.g. road marking have to be routinely replaced from time to time; why not make provision for cyclists at the same time!
- **Under planning rules new developments must contribute** towards new infrastructure; this money should be spent here!
- Some transport projects e.g. 20mph, produce health authority benefits (less accidents/better health) and **the PCT should contribute to cost of some schemes.**

Provision of a sensible transport infrastructure should to be a key performance indicator for EBC and SCC. **Residents should be able to monitor council performance – encouraged to be more involved and demanding – engaging with the councils on the plans that they are introducing.**

Transport Panel Next Steps

- **SCC Local Transport Plan (LTP3)** – *consultation now started online. Limited Vision....*
- **EBC Core Strategy public enquiry** – *probably July 2010. Follow up on representations.....*
- **Engage with Clrs/CCLrs** on transport vision, strategy and partnership – *but how and when?*