

SCRUTINY INITIATION DOCUMENT (SID)

Title of review: Net Zero Carbon 2030 - Active Travel in Islington

Scrutiny Committee: Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee

Director leading the review: Martijn Cooijmans, Director of Climate Change and Transport

Lead officers: Eshwyn Prabhu, Head of Transport Strategy and Air Quality; David Shannon, Active Travel Team Leader

Overall aim of the review:

We all need safer, cleaner streets and at least 20 minutes a day of physical activity to keep healthy. Active travel is the most accessible way to do this - not just by walking and cycling, but also by taking journeys on public transport, since these will usually include periods of walking. Active travel is all about making journeys by physically active means such as walking, wheeling, running or cycling. More often than not these journeys are relatively short such as the school run, trips to local shops, cycling to local workplaces or to the train station where a commuting journey continues.

The aim of this review is to consider how the council is working and can work to take the lead on supporting and enabling people to change to active travel, developing initiatives to widen the uptake of active travel and identifying ways to support residents and businesses to achieve both health benefits and financial resilience through active travel.

Objectives of the review:

- Enabling active travel – the council’s programme of projects, initiatives and promotion of different forms of active travel (cycling, walking and wheeling) and making residents aware of the services available to them (e.g. cycle training schemes, working with schools and businesses, cargo bikes, assisted purchase of cycles, secure cycle parking, cycle hire schemes).
- Inclusivity and disability – To consider equalities issues relating to active travel, and how the council can successfully challenge inequalities (such as physical and financial) in this area.
- Health and wellbeing – an exploration of the contribution of active travel to physical and mental wellbeing.
- Overcoming obstacles – a discussion of the key barriers to active travel and solutions available, including working with Transport for London to explore opportunities for joint working on active travel.

How does this review contribute to the Council’s priorities?

This review will contribute to the following priorities in the Islington Together 2023 Plan:

Fairer Together: Everyone in Islington who needs extra help can access the right support for them at the right time and in the right place.

Greener, Healthier Islington: Communities in Islington can access, and enjoy London’s greenest, cleanest, and healthiest neighbourhoods and are able to live healthy, fulfilling and independent lives.

Scope of the review and evidence to be received:

The review will focus on...

1. Enabling Active Travel

- What is active travel?
- What services does the council provide to support active travel?
- How does the council enable active travel and what services are available to residents?

2. Health and wellbeing

- A focus on the positive contribution active travel can have on mental and physical health.
- Expert witnesses from the health sector to discuss benefits, and

3. Inclusivity and disability

- Council initiatives that enable active travel for disability groups.
- An examination of the services offered to broaden participation in active travel, with presentations from expert witnesses.
- The financial benefits of active travel.
- Are all communities able to access services equally, what information, advice and support is available to support them?

Q&A panel discussion to follow.

4. Overcoming obstacles

- Expert witnesses and personal testimony to outline the obstacles to active travel.

Q&A panel discussion to follow.

The Committee will receive the following evidence:

Meeting – 17 October 2023

- Introduction by Martijn Cooijmans, Director of Climate Change & Transport
- Discussion topic – Islington Pensioners Forum attending.

Meeting – 23 November 2023

- Discussion topic – Enabling active travel (Presentations from Ourbike, Living Streets)
- Discussion topic – Health and Wellbeing (Presentation from Islington Public Health)
- A Q&A panel of the experts to answer questions from the committee

Meeting – 25 January 2024

- Discussion topic – Inclusivity and disability (Presentation from Wheels for Wellbeing)
- Discussion topic – Overcoming obstacles (Presentations from Transport for London and Cycle Sisters)
- A Q&A panel of the experts to answer questions from the committee

Additionally, at a separate date to be agreed, the Active Travel Team will offer an in-person **showcase of the active travel programme's highlights**, eg Dr Bike, cycle skills training, bike hangar and parking for hire bikes site visits.

Questions for consideration by the committee:

- What comments does the committee have on how to best promote the health benefits of active travel?
- How can the council improve inclusivity and widen participation in the active travel programme it offers?
- What communities are there in the borough that the council could better connect with to access the active travel services and are there new initiatives that could be created to serve those communities?

Review timetable (list specific meeting dates if possible)

1. SID to be agreed: 17 October 2023
2. Witness evidence to be received: 17 October 2023 – 25 January 2024
3. Draft recommendations to be considered: 7 March 2024
4. Report to be approved: 13 June 2024
5. Report to be submitted to Executive: July 2024 (Date TBC)
6. Provisional date for Executive response: September 2024 (Date TBC)
7. Provisional date for 12-month update report back to the Committee: October 2024 (Date TBC)

Additional information:

In carrying out the review the committee will consider equalities implications and resident impacts identified by witnesses. The Executive is required to have due regard to these, and any other relevant implications, when responding to the review recommendations.