

Active Travel St Helens
Lea Green to Whiston Hospital
“Have Your Say” Summer 2022
Frequently Asked Questions



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Press 'Ctrl' and Click to be taken to a question:

Active Travel St Helens FAQs

[What is Active Travel St Helens?](#)

[Who is involved in the project?](#)

[Why is this happening?](#)

[What stage is the project at?](#)

[How will the project be funded?](#)

[Who is the project for?](#)

[What input are you looking for from me?](#)

Terminology FAQs

[What is "Active Travel"?](#)

[Which technical standards are you using for this scheme?](#)

[What are protected cycle routes?](#)

[What are shared surfaces?](#)

[What are "corduroy" and "blister" paving?](#)

[What is a side road zebra crossing?](#)

[What are the different types of crossing facility?](#)

Route Specific FAQs

[What is the project?](#)

[Will this route be a similar design to the existing bollards on Chester Lane and Clock Face Road?](#)

[How would the route connect to the broader network?](#)

[What engagement has taken place already?](#)

[When will the project be complete?](#)



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For any other questions or to be sent a printed copy of the survey, please contact:

www.sthelens.gov.uk/contactus

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ACTIVE TRAVEL ST HELENS – Frequently Asked Questions FAQs

What is Active Travel St Helens?

St Helens Borough Council is committed to making it easier, safer and more attractive for people to walk and cycle for local trips. As part of this, we are developing plans to deliver a borough-wide walking and cycling network over the coming years. Our work in St Helens Borough builds upon wider plans for [a new 600km walking and cycling network](#) across the Liverpool City Region.

The first stage of the initiative involved delivering bollarded cycle lanes protected from traffic on Chester Lane, Jubits Lane and Clock Face Lane in 2020. We have recently completed a further route along Warrington Road and have a range of projects currently in delivery across the borough to deliver this network. We have now been awarded more funding to develop designs for further proposals that will make walking and cycling in St. Helens a more attractive choice of travel for everyone who lives and works here.

Our next set of proposals include providing new protected cycle routes, improved facilities for walking, reducing traffic speeds and safer crossing facilities for people walking and cycling. The routes will expand upon the existing walking and cycling infrastructure that has already been created in the Borough and support the City Region wide network under development. We don't have funding to construct the changes yet but are keen to build local community views into this process from the earliest opportunity.

This latest round of improvements form part of a wider network of Active Travel Routes currently being reviewed by the Council. The proposals will help the Council towards achieving its aims of improving health, tackling inequality and making St Helens Borough a Net Zero borough by 2040, tackling the impacts of climate change.

[Back to Top](#)

Who is involved in the project?

The project is being delivered by St. Helens Borough Council, in partnership with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority.

Engineering consultants Flinders Chase have been appointed by St Helens Borough Council to support with the preparation of designs for the routes we are currently seeking views on.

[Back to Top](#)

Why is this happening?

The [St Helens Borough Strategy](#) 2021-2030 sets out the Council's vision for improving people's lives together and creating distinct, attractive, healthy, safe, inclusive, and accessible places in which to live, work, visit and invest. This includes a target to improve active travel by making it easier, safer, and more attractive for us all to travel on foot or by bike more, particularly for shorter journeys. We are doing this because:

- We want to facilitate healthier and happier lifestyles in St Helens, tackling our growing obesity epidemic. Our [Healthy Weight Strategy](#) aims to halve the number of children in St Helens that are obese by 2030. Our [Active Lives Strategy](#) sets out the benefits of us all being more active in our daily lives.
- Climate Change is a huge issue which impacts everyone, both now and in the future. It is crucial we take steps to tackle it and its effects, so we can all look forward to a greener future. We are committed to tackling our carbon challenge of being net zero through improved air quality. Our [Climate Response Plan](#) recognises that a net zero borough means making it easier, quicker, cheaper, and safer to move around by low-carbon modes, with emissions from private cars and taxis responsible for 29% of greenhouse gas emissions in St Helens in 2019. We have an ambitious challenge to make the borough net carbon zero by 2040. Active travel becoming the normal mode for local journeys will contribute enormously to this goal while at the same time helping the travelling public to manage the impacts of the recent rise in the cost of living.
- We want to maximise opportunities for all of our residents to access local services, employment and education opportunities. Our Borough Strategy recognises the core role of developing well-connected places in developing a strong, thriving, inclusive and well-connected economy.
- The [Liverpool City Region Road Safety Strategy](#) sets out our plan to make streets across St Helens borough safer. The scheme aims to make walking and cycling in St. Helens safer. Hostile road conditions are one of the main barriers for people wanting to cycle, so the schemes aim to alleviate this problem and encourage everyone to enjoy active travel.
- [Recent polling](#) across the Liverpool City Region shows that majority of residents would like to see greater investment in walking, cycling and public transport. One third of residents say they do not currently cycle but would like to. For both walking and cycling, residents have told us that infrastructure improvements – wider pavements, better crossings, quieter streets and protected cycle routes – are one of the main factors which would help them to walk, wheel or cycle more.

[Back to Top](#)

What stage is the project at?

We are currently at the design stage of the project. As part of the process, we are now consulting with residents, businesses, and local stakeholders. We are looking for feedback on proposals where responses will be fed into designs, and ideas about how we can enhance our active travel network.

Once we have proposals that meet our objectives, and meet the needs of the local community, we will be seeking further funding to implement these schemes, each of which will be subject to a rigorous business case and full public consultation.

[Back to Top](#)

How will the project be funded?

Active Travel funding obtained from Central Government is being used to develop the designs. This is ring-fenced funding which can only be used for the development of new walking and cycling schemes.

No funding has currently been secured for delivery of the routes.

[Back to Top](#)

Who is this project for?

The project will provide high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure that is accessible to all regardless of age, gender, ethnicity or disability, from the age of 8 to 80, and beyond. The route will cater for all abilities and improve accessibility to employment, education and leisure sites both within the Borough and in the wider city region.

We want everyone who lives near the routes or uses them to move around the Borough to comment on the proposals.

[Back to Top](#)

What input are you looking for from me?

We want to seek your views on a number of specific issues relating to the design of the routes, along with any suggestions or comments you may have on those issues, or the project in general. We have prepared a brief survey for each route, linked from the project webpage, so that you can join in the consultation process.

[Back to Top](#)

TERMINOLOGY FAQs

What is “Active Travel”?

Active Travel means making journeys by physically active means - like walking, cycling, wheeling or scooting.

[Back to Top](#)

Which technical standards are you using for this scheme?

In July 2020, the UK Government published, “[Gear Change: A Bold Vision for Cycling and Walking](#)”, the national active travel strategy. The document marked a step change in how transport investment would be made in England, prioritising investment in active and sustainable modes at the heart of transport decision making. It sets out a vision which includes:

- **Healthier Happier and Greener communities** - Due to the increase in active travel and reduction in vehicle travel; resulting in cleaner, healthier, safer, and quieter streets.
- **Safer streets** - Where none are afraid to cycle to and from work and school.
- **Convenient and accessible travel** - Where cycling and walking are seen as the most convenient, desirable, and affordable way to travel and where everyone has opportunities to take up walking and cycling.

Supporting this strategy, [LTN 1/20](#) sets out technical design standards which the Department for Transport requires new schemes to meet to obtain funding.

The five core principles are:

Coherent: Cycle networks should be planned and designed to allow people to reach their destinations easily, along routes that connect, are simple to navigate and are of a consistently high quality.

Direct: Cycle routes should be at least as direct, and preferably more direct, than those available for private motor vehicles. Indirect routes will result in cyclists choosing to ride on the main carriageway because it is faster and more direct, even if less safe.

Safe: Not only must cycle infrastructure be safe, but it should also be perceived to be safe so that more people feel able to cycle.

Comfortable: Routes should have good-quality well-maintained smooth surfaces, adequate width, minimal stopping and starting and avoiding steep gradients. Uncomfortable transitions between on-and off carriageway facilities are best avoided.

Attractive: Cycle infrastructure should help to deliver public spaces that are well designed and finished in attractive materials and be places that people want to spend time using.

[Back to Top](#)

What are protected cycle routes?

Protected cycle routes are separated from both motor traffic and pedestrians. These can be:

Fully kerbed cycle routes, protected from motor traffic by a full-height kerb, preferably with some buffer space between the cycle route and carriageway, with the pedestrian footway set at a higher level.

Stepped cycle routes set below pedestrian footway level, typically protected from the carriageway by a lower height kerb and usually directly next to it.

Protected cycle routes may also be surfaced in a different colour to delineate them from the adjoining pedestrian footways and carriageway.

[Back to Top](#)

What are shared surfaces?

A shared surface footway / cycleway is preferable to creating sub-standard widths for both pedestrian footways and protected cycle routes where the overall available width is 3.0m or less. It allows users to walk or cycle side by side and negotiate the space when passing.

[Back to Top](#)

What are “corduroy” and “blister” paving?

Corduroy paving is a type of tactile paving comprising a series of raised flat-topped bars. It is normally buff coloured. They are used in a number of scenarios, including to delineate protected cycle routes. On the footway side, the surface is laid so that the bars are transversely across the main direction of travel for people walking, and it is called the ‘ladder’ surface in this orientation. On the cycle route side, the surface is laid so that the bars are in line with the main direction of travel for people cycling, and it is called the ‘tramline’ surface in this orientation. This arrangement was chosen because it was felt the rumble effect created by the transverse pattern would deter cyclists from entering on the pedestrian side.

Blister paving is a type of tactile paving comprising rows of flat-topped half-spheres (‘blisters’), arranged in straight lines. They are used at designated pedestrian crossing points to provide a warning and guide to visually impaired people who may otherwise find it difficult to differentiate between where the footway ends and the carriageway begins.

[Back to Top](#)

What is a side road zebra crossing?

A side road zebra crossing uses the black and white markings of a standard zebra crossing but without the flashing yellow lights, crossing studs and zigzag markings. By not including the zigzag markings it is possible to install the crossing on pedestrians’ desired walking line, directly across the mouth of the junction.

The side road zebra reminds drivers of recent changes to the Highway Code whereby vehicles turning in to a junction should give way to road users (including pedestrians) who are continuing ahead.

[Back to Top](#)

What are the different types of crossing facility?

Puffin crossings are signal-controlled crossings for pedestrians only. They may be installed at junctions or as stand-alone crossings.

Toucan crossings are signal-controlled crossings shared between pedestrians and cyclists, with no separation between the two types of users. They may be installed at junctions or as stand-alone crossings.

Zebra crossings have white strips painted onto the road in the crossing area, with flashing yellow lights at both sides of the road on black and white striped poles. Vehicle users are required to stop when they see a pedestrian waiting at the edge of a zebra crossing to allow them to cross the road.

The parallel crossing, sometimes referred to as a Tiger crossing or Sparrow crossing, is similar in form to a zebra crossing, but with a separate parallel cycle crossing alongside the zebra crossing. Drivers must give way to pedestrians and cyclists using the crossing. It provides a more demand responsive solution compared to signalised facilities.

A signal-controlled cycle facility may be provided where a cycle route is connected across a road or an arm of a junction. The crossing may be for cyclists only but can be provided adjacent to a pedestrian crossing facility (Puffin crossing) which may be useful where separate but parallel routes exist. The pedestrian and cycle crossings do not have to operate with the same signal timings.

[Back to Top](#)

ROUTE SPECIFIC FAQs

Lea Green to Whiston Hospital (via B5204 Elton Head Road/B5413 Rainhill Road/Ellerslie Avenue/Two Butt Lane/Holt Lane/Longview Avenue/Longview Road)

What is the project?

The route extends along Elton Head Road from the A570 St. Helens Linkway junction to the B5413 Rainhill Road. At the Black Horse Inn the route then turns along Ellerslie Avenue and then crosses the brook to join Two Butt Lane. It then turns onto Holt Lane before travelling along Longview Avenue and Longview Road to finish at Whiston Hospital.

On the B5204 Elton Head Road it is proposed to improve the footways and introduce new protected cycle routes, separated from motor traffic, with additional crossing points to help pedestrians and cyclists cross the road. Doing this requires an extension of parking restrictions along Elton Head Road to improve safety and avoid parked cars blocking the cycle route.

On Ellerslie Avenue, Nottingham Close, Sherwood Close, Holt Lane, Longview Avenue and Longview Road it is proposed to lower the speed limit to 20mph.

On Ellerslie Avenue, Two Butt Lane, Holt Lane, Longview Avenue and Longview Road it is proposed to add junction tables to reinforce the reduction in the speed limit so that cyclists can use the carriageway to travel along this part of the route.

Between Two Butt Lane and Longton Lane, our preferred option is to introduce a new protected cycle route, separated from motor traffic. However, if this is not possible, a second option is to introduce traffic restrictions in the Longton Lane area to reduce “through traffic” between the B5201 Delph Lane/Portico Lane and the B5413 Rainhill Road. The reduction in traffic volumes and speed would create the necessary conditions to allow cyclists to travel on carriageway between Two Butt Lane and Longton Lane in compliance with the new design standards in LTN 1/20

[Back to Top](#)

Will this route be a similar design to the existing bollards on Chester Lane and Clock Face Road?

No, any protected cycle routes along this route will be physically separated from the carriageway by either a kerb line or a change in level, rather than the line of bollards used on the existing scheme.

[Back to Top](#)

How would the route connect to the broader network?

The new section of protected cycle route along the B5204 Elton Head Road will connect to the broader borough cycle network through infrastructure being constructed as part of the St Helens Southern Gateway scheme, at the junction of the B5204 Elton Head Road with the A570 St. Helens Linkway. This would allow journeys to continue towards Lea Green station and the Town Centre.

More information on the St Helens Southern Gateway proposals can be found on our website at <https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/leagreen>

[Back to Top](#)

What engagement has taken place already?

We have engaged with elected councillors and other significant stakeholders, but we want to seek the views of the wider community before any detailed plans are developed.

[Back to Top](#)

When will the project be complete?

Following public consultation, the feedback will be incorporated into the final designs. Once those designs are completed, likely early 2023, the process for funding applications for the construction will begin.

[Back to Top](#)