

Date: 12/6/2020
Our reference: Covid-19 Safe Travel in Camden/Well Walk
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Responding to Coronavirus (COVID-19)

New Coronavirus (COVID-19) safety measures on Well Walk

Dear Resident / Business, Local group,

Summary

- **We are making changes to widen some sections of pavement on Well Walk to make it easier for you to physically distance from other people in response to Coronavirus (COVID-19)**
- **Work is estimated to start from 18 June 2020**
- **You can share your comments on these changes via safetravel@Camden.gov.uk**
- **You can find out more about these changes on our website <https://www.camden.gov.uk/making-travel-safer-in-camden>**
- **Make your suggestion for locations you think need changes via <https://camdensafetravel.commonplace.is/> , email or call us using the details above**

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has created new road safety challenges in Camden that the council is taking seriously. We want to make it easier and safer for people to walk and cycle locally, shop on their local high street, reach their local green spaces, schools and NHS sites, all while maintaining physical distancing. We are also looking to tackle future challenges caused by changes in the way that people travel once lockdown restrictions are fully eased. This includes a predicted rise in walking, cycling and car use with people less likely to choose public transport.

The safety based changes we are implementing are supported by the Government. The Department for Transport has issued statutory guidance to Councils to rapidly reallocate road space to people walking and cycling. This is in addition to guidance from the Mayor of London via the TfL Streetspace programme.

To respond to these new challenges quickly we are making a series of safety-based changes to streets in Camden. Included in this letter is:

- Detail on the changes being made in your area
- A drawing showing the changes being made
- A drawing showing who we have notified
- Information on how to find out more

How are we responding to Coronavirus (COVID-19) safety issues?

We have identified a number of locations across the borough to begin to tackle the safety issues, including that proposed in your area. These initial locations have been chosen as they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- New safety issues with physical distancing, walking or cycling have been highlighted to us as a result of Coronavirus (COVID-19)
- Before the pandemic there had already been some local community engagement from existing projects which highlighted issues which we are looking to address
- They are areas where we can make it easier and safer for people maintaining physical distancing while walking and cycling locally, to shop, reach their local green spaces, schools and NHS sites

These safety measures include looking at widening pavements, reducing through traffic on residential streets and creating “pop-up” cycle lanes. This will make it easier for people to access amenities and to use local roads to journey to key destinations or simply for exercise while staying 2m apart.

You can tell us your own suggestions for other locations by using our dedicated website which can be found here: <https://camdensafetravel.commonplace.is/> or by emailing us at safetravel@Camden.gov.uk

What are the challenges on Well Walk?

Overall the number of vehicles using our roads is down but speeding has increased as a minority of irresponsible drivers take advantage of quieter roads. Across London, during the lockdown period, some average speeds were recorded at 37mph on 20mph roads. Locally, areas of Camden which already suffered from speeding problems have seen speed increases of as much as 13%.

As the lockdown is eased there is expected to be a rise in walking, cycling and car use – as both public transport capacity decreases due to social distancing, and people choose alternative means of travel. This change in the way people travel will mean extra pressure on streets.

TfL have estimated that if all car-owning households switched their usual public transport journeys to car, some boroughs would see a near doubling in the number of private transport journeys, causing massive congestion issues. In Camden this would be an increase in private transport trips of over 90% in addition to an increase in car trips originating in other boroughs.

Additionally early modelling by TfL has revealed there could be more than a 10-fold increase in kilometres cycled, and up to five times the amount of walking, compared to pre-COVID levels. We have already started to see this reflected in Camden. Weekend cycle flows at our

three automatic cycle count point sites have recorded an average increase of 120% in cycling levels this May compared to last.

We are also aware that physical distancing requirements have meant that some areas of pavement are now too narrow for pedestrians to use safely.

On Well Walk specifically we know that there are sections of very narrow footway. This is a popular route for both residents and visitors accessing Hampstead Heath. In addition wider footways have also been requested via the Commonplace map to assist physical distancing. In order to respond to the challenge of narrow pavements in this location we are going to be temporarily widening sections, making it easier for people to maintain a physical distance while accessing their local green space in addition to the customers of the Wells Tavern once they reopen.

What will the work involve?

The changes we will be making on Well Walk include widening the pavement in the following locations using temporary barriers to protect pedestrians from vehicles:

- Between Gainsborough Gardens and Christchurch Hill outside The Wells Tavern – removing 51m of resident permit holder parking bays creating extra space for pedestrians to walk to their local green space while limiting their need to step into the road
- Pedestrians will be protected from the road by water filled barriers with gaps left for refuse collection
- This will not be noisy work

Drawings of what these changes will look like is included with this letter.

How can you give your views?

We know that there is an immediate need for these safety improvements in response to Coronavirus (COVID-19) so we are making these changes as quickly as possible. If you have any concerns or comments on the changes you can get in touch via the details below.

How can you find out more?

Information on these schemes can be found on our website <https://www.camden.gov.uk/making-travel-safer-in-camden>

Where you can also find:

- The full Single Member Decision report
- The Commonplace map for Coronavirus (COVID-19) where you can make your location suggestions <https://camdensafetravel.commonplace.is/>

In the meantime if you have any further questions or comments on the measures please don't hesitate to get in touch via safetravel@Camden.gov.uk or via 020 7974 4444.

WELL WALK SOCIAL DISTANCING MEASURES

