

Dear resident

I'm writing because you have contacted us previously with your thoughts about some temporary changes that were made to Cycleway 9 on Chiswick High Road in December 2020. It has been a little time since our last update to you so this email covers several topics.

Background to the temporary changes

Hounslow Council and Transport for London (TfL) want more people to walk, cycle and use public transport. There are huge benefits for the local community and the economy – fewer road casualties, improved air quality, less congestion and healthier residents. TfL and Hounslow ran public consultations in 2017 and 2019 into proposals for Cycleway 9 including Chiswick High Road, and there was clear support for the vision. In December 2019 we started construction of a range of measures at Kew Bridge, including protected cycle lanes and access restrictions to Wellesley Road / Stile Hall Gardens.

Due to the pandemic and constraints on our funding however, it was necessary for us and Hounslow to develop a new temporary layout, as part of a trial. In December 2020, we and Hounslow introduced these trial changes along Chiswick High Road, including protected cycle lanes. These changes sought to enable more cycling as an emergency response to the coronavirus and to help avoid a car-based recovery.

Cycling & road safety

Our data shows that cycling is one of the only modes of transport to have increased during the pandemic, with current cycling levels around 40% up compared to the baseline. Our data shows particularly significant increases at weekends, of more than 200% in certain locations. Data for Chiswick High Road shows that up to 2,700 people are now cycling at weekends, including families and children. The number of people cycling is growing and there were 72% more cyclists on weekdays in April 2021 than in February 2021. Cycling is now an important transport mode allowing people to safely get around and in April 2021 daily counts showed that people cycling made up 20% of all 'vehicles' on Chiswick High Road.

Another reason for introducing temporary protected cycle lanes along Chiswick High Road was to address the high number of cycling casualties that unfortunately occurred each year. Making streets safer for the most vulnerable road users is a key priority for us. It's therefore really encouraging that the latest provisional data from the Metropolitan Police suggests it is now much safer to cycle along Chiswick High Road than before the cycle lanes were introduced. In the 12 months before we introduced the new temporary cycle lanes to Chiswick High Road, there were eight collisions. In the six months since we introduced the temporary scheme, there have been only two collisions.

Traffic flow and people's views locally

While cycling has increased significantly, Tube and bus use remains lower than before the pandemic and car use is now back to pre-pandemic levels. The recent increase in car use in west London is at certain times in some locations leading to longer traffic queues and slightly slower bus journey times (in May 2021, bus journey times were up to 1.3 minutes per km slower than the average in 2019).



Some people have rightly raised concerns about this. Residents have suggested that we should reinstate a traffic lane at the Chiswick Lane/Chiswick High Road junction along with other changes. People have also highlighted concerns that the trial changes were introduced without advance consultation. The public aren't normally consulted before changes are trialled, and there was an urgent need to introduce the scheme quickly as an emergency response to the coronavirus. Even so, we understand and accept that residents have a voice and want to be heard.

Other residents have told us they support the cycle lanes and want them to stay, which is reflected in the increase in people cycling. We commissioned independent representative research to get a balanced view from residents in the area. This research shows that there is support from residents for the protected cycle lanes in Chiswick High Road, with 47% in support of the scheme.

Listening to you

We and Hounslow Council have looked at the traffic data closely and listened to the issues raised by residents and businesses. We believe the right way forward is to make some changes to Chiswick High Road, and then hold a new consultation with local people and other stakeholders. We will make the changes as part of an experiment, and we will closely monitor their effects. The consultation would support our monitoring by allowing local people to tell us about their experiences of the effects of the scheme. We will also use the outcomes of the consultation to help us decide what the longer-term future of the scheme should be. The changes we plan to make to the scheme are:

- Reinststate the left-turn lane at the Chiswick Lane junction to improve traffic flow and bus journey times
- Introduce an eastbound bus lane between Holmfield Road and Netheravon Road, and a westbound bus lane between Airedale Avenue and Netheravon Road to improve bus journey times.
- Make a series of other changes between Chiswick Lane and Heathfield Terrace, including new bus shelters at bus stops and more places for taxis and other vehicles to pick up and drop off passengers. These changes will be better for bus passengers and make it easier for the elderly and disabled to use taxis and other vehicles.

In July 2021, Hounslow Council will decide whether it agrees to these changes, but we wanted you to know what changes could be made and what they would mean as soon as possible. We will keep you informed of our plans and we will publish more of the data we have collected over the last six months in future updates.

Between 15 and 26 February 2021, as part of our continuous engagement about the temporary changes to Chiswick High Road, we arranged for members of the public with an interest in the Cycleway 9 Streetspace scheme to speak to a member of our Local Communities and Partnerships team, one-on-one, via Microsoft Teams. You can view a full copy of our 'Community Conversations' Engagement Report [here](#).

We continue to encourage you to provide your comments and suggestions by emailing us at haveyoursay@tfl.gov.uk.

Thank you for your contributions so far.

Yours sincerely,
Fraser Macdonald

Streetspace Engagement team
Transport for London

