

Going out

Prioritising pedestrians in public spaces

Our public spaces in Southwark are centred around streets. High levels of traffic undermine the aim of making these spaces safe and comfortable places to be.

Changing the way we manage public spaces is key to reimagining them as centres of a connected community and local economy.



Objective 3: Designing public spaces around pedestrians

Prioritising motor vehicle access to social places increases noise and air pollution and the risk of collisions. It means when people visit these social spaces, whether by car or not, they are less likely to stay, reducing the opportunity to discover new places or meet new people.

By reducing traffic volumes and vehicle speed, and by providing more space to pedestrians in public spaces, such as outside schools, leisure centres or on our high streets, we will create opportunities for people to come together and connect with the wider community. Town centres that are welcoming to pedestrians, are more vibrant and encourage people to spend more time there⁷. Improving the pedestrian experience will help improve the local economy.

Reducing traffic on residential streets reduces people's exposure to noise and air pollution, benefitting their health. Streets with less traffic are nicer and safer places to be, helping people to build relationships with their neighbours and connect with their local community.



⁷ Living Streets, The Pedestrian Pound, 2018. Available at: <https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/media/3890/pedestrian-pound-2018.pdf>

What we will do:

3.1 Consider opportunities for new social spaces as part of the Pedestrian Network plan.

3.2 Look for opportunities to improve existing, and create new, public spaces when preparing the delivery plan for new projects.

3.3 Reduce traffic on local residential roads, while protecting access. This will make the streets quieter and safer, and **provide more opportunities and space for communities to connect.**

3.4 Direct traffic away from our town centres wherever possible, and use the space created to provide **new social spaces and to support the local economy, through measures such as markets and outdoor dining.**

3.5 **Maintain motor vehicles access where it is needed for public transport access and to support the operation**

of local businesses. Use timed loading restrictions and other traffic control measures to keep vehicles away from the busiest times of the day.

3.6 Reduce reliance on motor vehicles for delivering goods and services, including the use of cars for shopping. we will do this by supporting walking and cycling first, and then sustainable freight measures on our streets. This includes expanding our cargo bike hire scheme, and using parcel consolidation, for example in lockers or local shops to reduce the traffic created by home deliveries. All this will allow us to create more space for pedestrians while allowing essential business to continue. Full details will be provided in our forthcoming Freight Plan.

3.7 Deliver School Streets, or, where they are not possible, other safety and public realm enhancements to create social spaces outside schools, allowing students, parents and guardians to interact.

