



LBRUT Cycling Strategy & “Mini Holland” Bid

Richmond Cycling Campaign

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Background

LBRUT is engaged in bidding for money from the Mayor’s “mini Holland” scheme; to improve cycling facilities in the borough. In parallel, LBRUT is also evolving its Cycling Strategy. An update on both items were provided to councillors at the “Environment, Sustainability and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee” on 7/10/2013.

Representatives of Richmond Cycling Campaign (the local branch of the London Cycling Campaign) provided comments on these issues; and were asked to provide further input.

This document has been prepared to provide LBRUT officers with input into both the cycling strategy and the mini Holland bid; as part of the ongoing engagement between RCC and LBRUT officers.

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Why Cycling?

Increasing cycling rates and shifting journey modes to cycling from both cars and public transport has many benefits to the community as a whole. These include:

- Improved public health; with less strain on health services.
- Reduced impact on the environment – emissions; air quality; and traffic noise
- Improved traffic flow (by replacing vehicle journeys with cycling journeys)
- Easing congestion on public transport (by replacing bus, train and tube journeys with cycling journeys).
- Good for local businesses – shoppers on bikes can access shops more directly; without the hassles of finding car parking.

Central to the Mayor's vision is the belief that more cycling will benefit everyone, not just cyclists. Furthermore, cycling facilities and infrastructure are cheap when compared to road building or investments in public transport capacity (more buses / train carriages / etc).

Local context

In common with many parts of London, comparison of census data from 2001-2011 shows car ownership per household fell in LBRUT. Similarly, DFT road traffic stats show overall vehicle traffic in the boroughs streets also fell during the same decade. Meanwhile, cycling for sport and leisure appears to have increased dramatically – as evidenced by the growth in the number of up-market bike shops in the borough during this time.

However, the total cycling modal share for all journeys remains small; and cycling is not a popular choice for everyday journeys – particular for parents with kids – of which the borough has many. RCC campaigns for an urban environment that is conducive for cycling for people of all ages and backgrounds. We believe the primary reason people chose not to cycle are because they do not feel safe on the roads; and they do not find cycling convenient when compared to other modes of transport. A network of **Safe Direct and Convenient** routes around the borough is a key requirement for enabling growth in cycling.

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The LBRUT Cycling Strategy Proposals – RCC Feedback

LBRUT VISION

“The Council’s vision for cycling in Richmond upon Thames is to achieve a natural and built-up environment that permits anyone to cycle safely within the borough and to instil a culture that encourages cycling over other modes of transport for short trips.”

RCC Response:

- We welcome the vision; but would like it to contain more specific commitment to increasing cycling rates in the borough.
- The commitment to a 10% rate by 2025 is un-ambitious.
- If cycling became the default option for short trips we would be looking at closer to 50% rather than 10%, by 2025.
- Cycling rates are already higher than 10% on certain routes. DfT stats for 2012 showed a modal share of 15% cyclists on Sheen Road in Richmond town centre; and over 7% on Heath Road in Twickenham; and over 1300 cycle journeys per day on Castlenau in Barnes.
- The current road network does not adequately serve those already cycling – with many places where cyclists are put in conflict with motor traffic or pedestrians.

NETWORK

- We very much support the creation of a cycle network and would be happy to provide input
- The network must focus on providing safe direct and convenient routes to schools, town centres and local amenities.
- Commuter routes are only part of the story - the south western half of the borough is probably too far for many people to consider commuting to central London.
- As well as quietways the network must address key main roads where there is no direct alternate quietway.
- The Mayor’s Vision recognises that achieving useful Quietways is likely to require both removing motor traffic from rat-runs and crossing / running alongside some major roads with appropriate treatment. It specifically warns against “giving up when things become difficult” which has historically been the default option in Richmond. We hope that these aspects are implied by the description “comprehensive”.
- We completely support the view that “Classic cycle permeability measures such as limited road closures to cars improves life for all who live or walk on that street. Residential streets should be made safe for children to play wherever possible. It makes it safer for children crossing the road, cuts down on traffic; noise/pollution and it could make room for new green space, tree planting or improved pavements.” However experience has shown the Council to have a “can’t do” attitude to road closures. Achieving the objective requires tolerating a short-term increase in congestion on main roads until alleviated by a modal shift.

SAFER STREETS FOR THE BIKE

- Safer streets is not just about education of cyclists and lorry drivers.
- It’s about the streets not the people using them – we must design-in safety ; not just rely on education.
- The strategy should include the introduction of 20mph limits; these would make a major contribution and would actually improve traffic flow in many instances.
- We must educate all drivers – not just lorry drivers and cyclists – via publicity; but also via consistent and regular enforcement of regulations such as incursion into mandatory cycle lanes and ASLs.

MORE PEOPLE TRAVELLING BY BIKE

- LBRUTs mode share target is unambitious
- LBRUT need to recognise that on some routes mode share is already v high and existing facilities are not good enough
- We welcome the focus on schools – the school travel plans already highlight a number of issues; and rigorous analysis of these would provide a good basis for developing the cycle network.

BETTER PLACES FOR EVERYONE

- Design out conflict with pedestrians
- More cycling does not mean more traffic congestion, if properly implemented

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- However, to deliver on the strategy there will in places be a need to prioritise cycling facilities (eg lanes) via re-allocation of street space - eg on street car parking bays. The council should take a clear policy position on this. If everyone's second car was a bike; we should in the end see a reduction in demand for car parking spaces.

IMPLEMENTATION

- LBRUT should provide clear planning policies that promote cycling – e.g. all changes to road layouts should aim to improve facilities for cycling; all designs should be physically tested by officers riding a bike on them; and all new private developments should be forced to fund and provide cycling provision (such as high quality cycle parking).
- Meaningful change requires investment; the current sums being budgeted by LBRUT do not provide that investment

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The LBRUT Mini Holland Proposals – RCC Feedback

RCC's review of the first round "Mini Holland" bid has been published here:

<http://www.richmondlcc.co.uk/2013/07/22/lbruts-mini-holland-bid-in-more-detail/>

RCC welcomes LBRUTs short-listing for the next round of the bid. We believe the priority should be for the provision of safe direct and convenient routes to schools, shops and town centre areas that characterise the Dutch approach. RCC has a number of concerns about the projects proposed by LBRUT in the first round bid – in particular that they present a number of large disconnected projects that won't result in the desired effect on cycling rates in the borough. We urge the LBRUT to take note of our feedback on these below, when preparing their second round bid.

TWICKENHAM TOWN CENTRE

Segregated Track on London Road & Twickenham Super-Hub. The bid proposed to install a "Danish-esque" cycle track along London Rd northern section from the junction with Whitton Road down to Railway Approach; and turn Twickenham Station into a "Super-Hub" with 450 parking spaces.

RCC View: We think this means a dedicated lane with a half-height kerb between the pavement and the road. This has already been done in the UK at Old Shoreham Road in Brighton – which cost £720k for a much longer stretch than proposed by LBRUT here. What is a "Super-Hub"? We think this means a lot of secure cycle parking. Both of these are welcome measures, but hardly radical. The original bid fails to offer any improvements on the existing Twickenham town centre designs; which still appear to consist of a few lines of paint interrupted by parking bays. This should be addressed in Round 2.

COMMUTER ROUTES TO CENTRAL LONDON: A316.

The bid proposed upgrades to the existing A316 cycle track, including a footbridge to Twickenham stadium, Toucan crossings at Chalkers Corner, and "replacement of several (at least 5) existing roundabouts with Dutch-style roundabouts to improve the permeability at key junctions".

RCC View: RCC has long campaigned on the issues with the A316 cycletrack – and we would be really happy to see these addressed. However, we are really concerned that investing in up to 5 Dutch style roundabouts on the A316 would be a large waste of money. The style of roundabout depicted is not of a suitable design for the A316, the Dutch only use this style on low/medium volume roads not major through routes and only on single lane (1x1) roads.

The areas that do need improvement on the A316 include giving cyclists on the separated track priority over side roads; removing obstructions; widening the track; improving signage; linking the cycletrack with the Thames-side paths on Twickenham bridge; and providing more and better north-south crossing points.

The bridge to Twickenham Stadium is a good concept but would be far better as an underpass. An underpass can be wider removing conflict points, and only needs to go down 8 feet while a bridge needs to go up 20 feet (none of the foot bridges over the A316 are cycle friendly).

COMMUTER ROUTES TO CENTRAL LONDON: QUIET ROUTE TO CS8.

The bid proposed a new quiet route from Chalker's corner through Mortlake and Sheen, to link up with Cycle Superhighway 8 (in Wandsworth), including demolition and rebuild of a bridge over the railway linking North Worple Way / South Worple Way.

RCC View: Cyclists want safe direct and convenient routes. The direct way to central London from Twickenham / Richmond / Sheen is via Sheen Road / Upper Richmond Road West (A205) and then up to Hammersmith Bridge (for Kensington and Shepherds Bush) or Putney Bridge/Kings Road (for West End and the City) . This is borne out by our analysis of cycle traffic stats from the DFT's on road counters here. We think few cyclists from Richmond head for CS8.

The quiet route through Mortlake / Sheen largely exists already as LCN37; and it would be good to link this to the A316; but the proposed route is via a dogleg that re-enforces the feeling that this bid is based on old-school thinking – that we can

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route cyclists all round the houses rather than tackle the difficult problems – which in this case would be Lower Richmond Road or Clifford Avenue.

Making railway bridges cycle friendly is a great idea; but the bid seems to choose a most obscure bridge for an upgrade. Upgrades to the bridges at Mortlake station, St Mary's Grove and Teddington would have far more benefit.

RIVER CRANE QUIETWAY: TWICKENHAM - HEATHROW

The bid proposed upgrades to the River Crane corridor route, with a long term aspiration to link up with routes in Hounslow through to Heathrow, for those that work there.

RCC View: This is a welcome proposal, that needs to be carefully executed in order to preserve the character of the natural environment along that route. We hope that LBRUT will seek engagement with RCC and the Friends of River Crane Environment (FORCE) to work through the details and ensure any pedestrian /cycle conflict is minimised.

RAILSIDE CYCLING ROUTES:

LBRUT is proposing to install new segregated cycle tracks which will run alongside the two main railway lines in the Borough which run through Hampton and Teddington, and also alongside the line between Whitton and the A316.

RCC View: This is a great concept – but we are not convinced this will deliver value for money; especially where, despite the considerable expense of modifying cuttings to accommodate cycle tracks cyclists would still need to climb out of the cutting to wait to cross roads at-grade five times in about half a mile (eg Strawberry Hill - Hampton)

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Richmond Cycling Campaign's Vision

We believe that the provision of safe direct and convenient routes is key to getting new people cycling. The borough benefits from many scenic leisure routes; but routes to schools, shops and town centre areas are typically blighted by busy roads with little protection for cyclists; and these create conditions which are intimidating and deter people from making journeys by bike.

The creation of a high quality cycle network that spans the whole borough should be a key aim of the both the strategy and the Mini-Holland bid.

Previous attempts to create a network, under the London Cycle Network scheme; were poorly implemented and suffer from:

- Disconnected routes. **Routes should be continuous.**
- Backstreet routes with poor or little signage; that result in cyclists resorting to main roads to avoid getting lost. **Routes must be well sign-posted – e.g. with prominent way-markings on the road surface that tell drivers and cyclists alike that this is a bicycle route.**
- Many barriers, obstructions, requiring frequent dismounts; or worse –the need to lug a bike round or over an obstacle. **Routes should be passable with a cargo bike or trailer; and not require dismounts or lifting the bike.**
- Conflict with pedestrians. **Where pedestrians and cyclists share paths, this should be clearly marked; to avoid misunderstandings over who has rights to the path. “No cycling” signs on paths should be removed if they are not going to be enforced. Adequate space should be provided for both pedestrians and cyclists.**
- Lack of protection on main road sections. **Routes on main roads should include “hard” protection/separation, - e.g. kerbs/planters/armadillos etc – not just painted bike lines**

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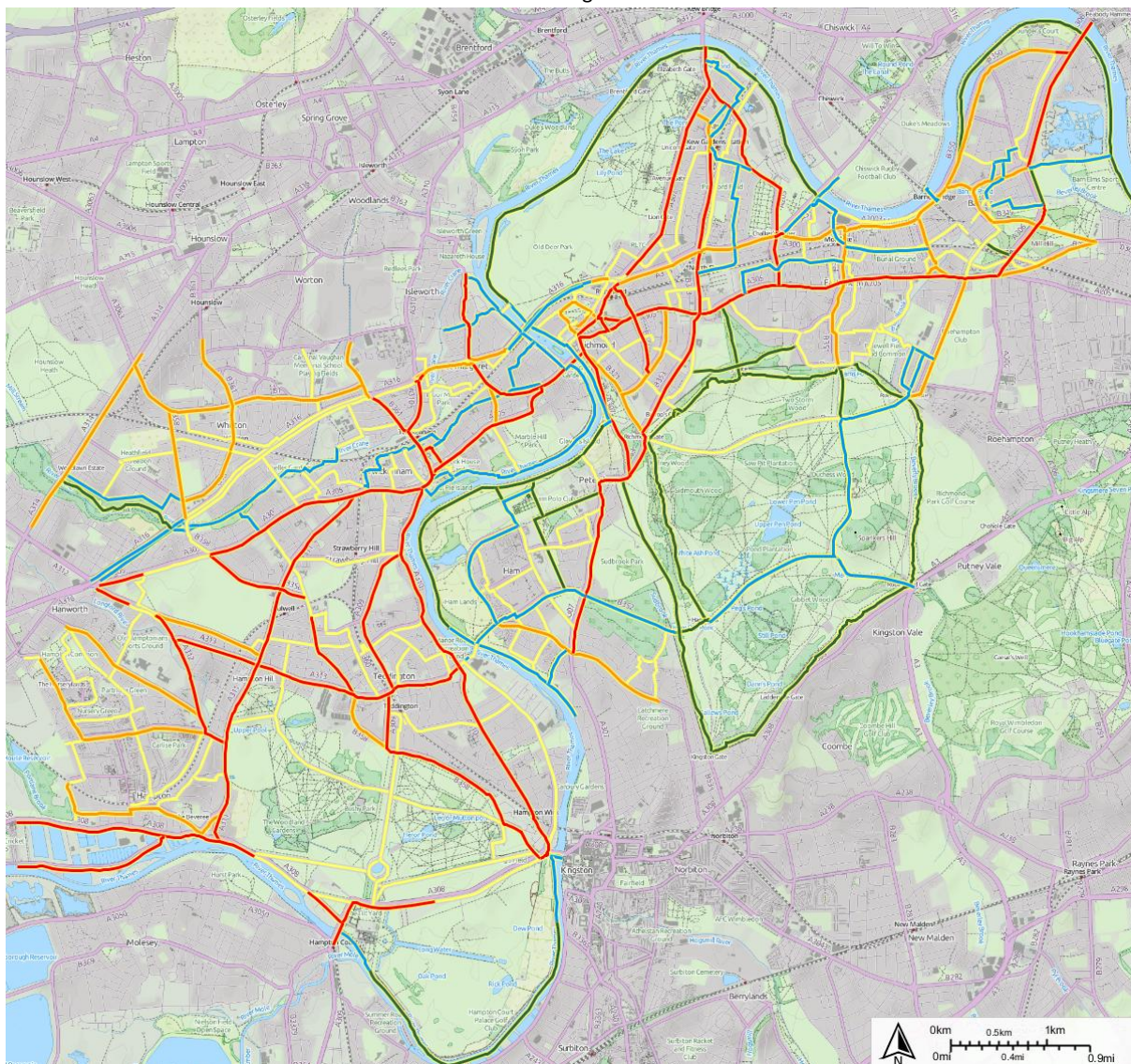


The Richmond Cycling Network Today

The map below shows the key cycling routes in the borough; graded according to the routes “subjective safety” and convenience. By “subjective safety” we mean the “perceived safety” i.e. does the route feel safe to cycle on? Would travelling this route with a competent 10 year old child or other vulnerable cyclist be a stressful or pleasant experience? This map gives an indicator of the user experience of travelling the many routes around the borough.

- BLUE - convenient, signposted routes, with good subjective safety
- YELLOW - subjective safety is good; but route is inconvenienced - e.g. by obstructions; lack of signage; conflict with pedestrians etc
- GREEN - off-road routes; not suitable for all bikes; not lit at night time
- ORANGE - poor subjective safety.
- RED - significant lack of subjective safety.

Fig 1



One of the primary issues for the local cyclists is that that many of the key routes around the borough rely upon use of the main road network. In the following versions of the same map we have removed the hostile RED routes from the map (and zoomed in a little).

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Fig 2

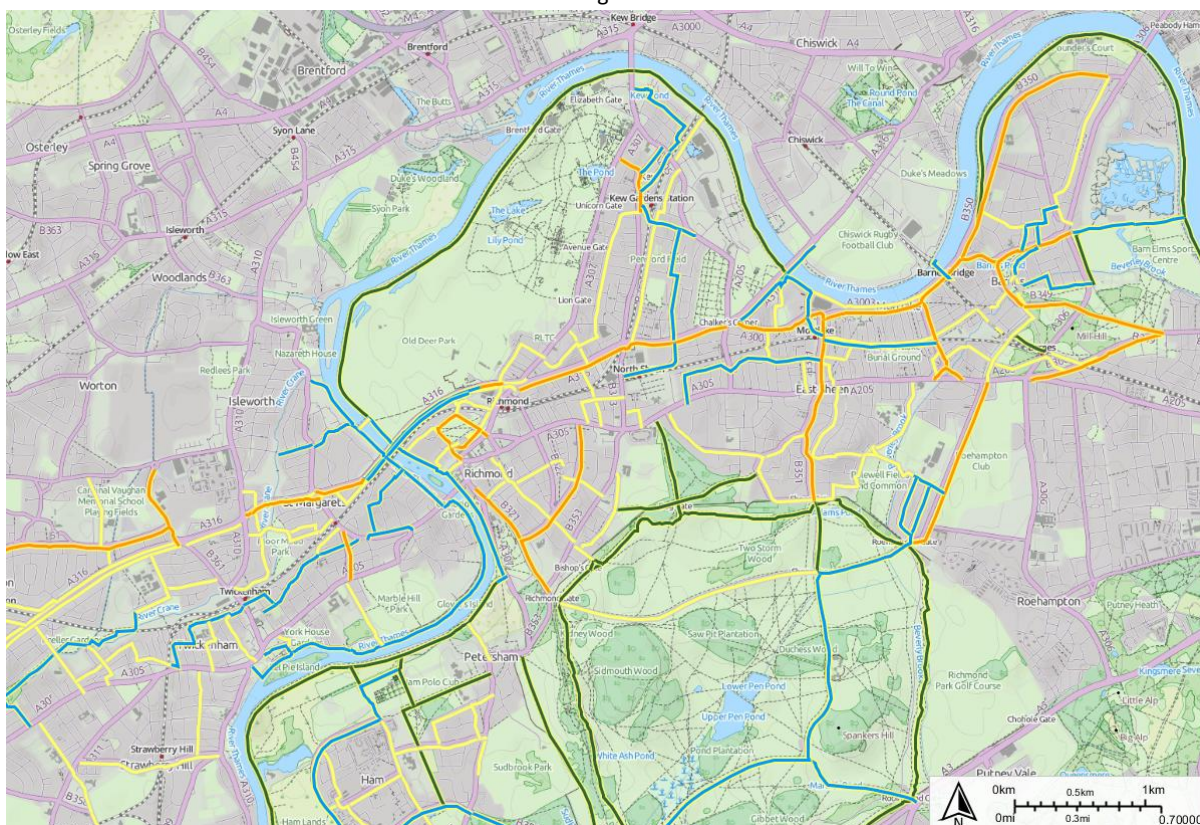
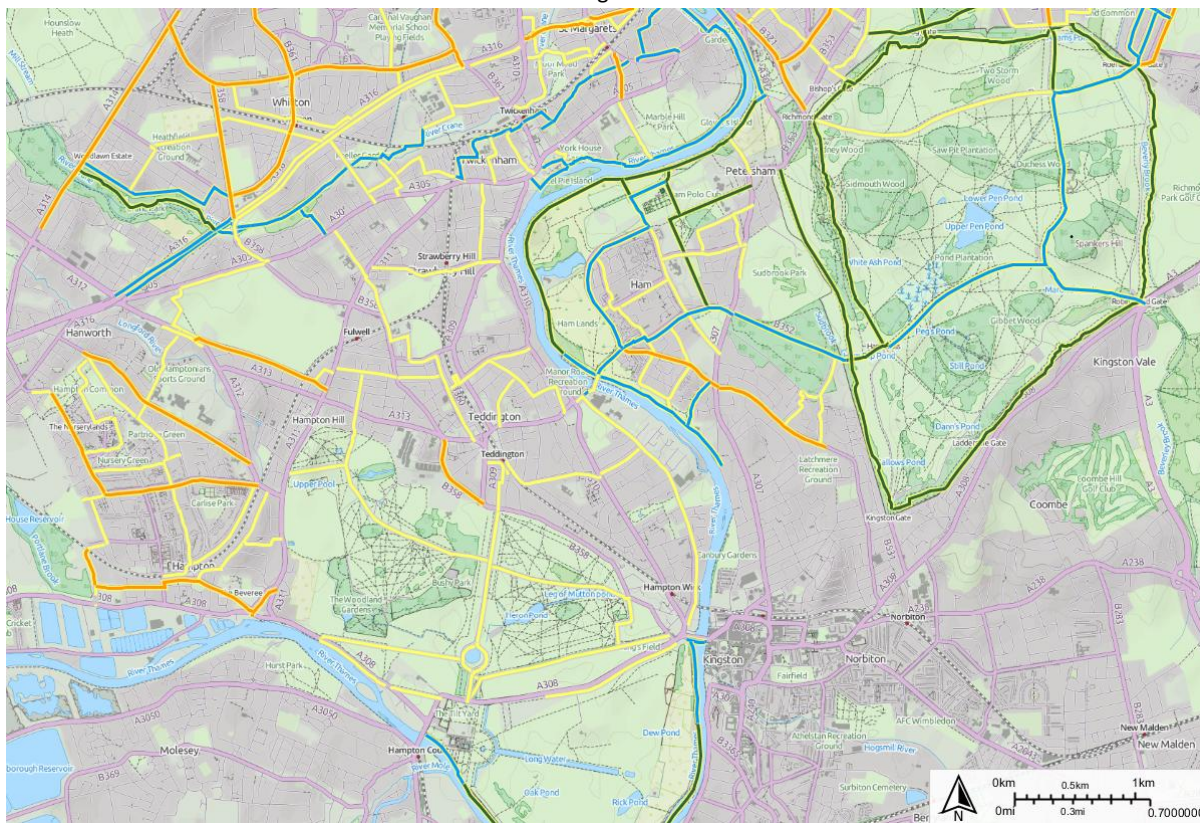


Fig 3



This version of the map highlights the disjointed nature of the “quiet” network today.

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The Richmond Cycling Network - Key Areas for Improvement

Ideally, people should be able to cycle throughout the borough on routes graded as “blue”. To achieve this:

- The “yellow” routes could, in general, be upgraded to “blue” standard through better signage and removal of particular barriers or obstructions.
- Key areas of the off-road “green” network should be upgraded with improved surfacing and streetlighting to provide viable 24x7 routes that do not require the cyclist to get covered in mud.
- The “orange” network has some safety issues. The impact of these could be mitigated by traffic calming; 20mph limits; or addressing some key concerns such as priority over side roads on the A316.

The map also highlights the following key gaps in the network, where there is currently no alternative but to use a busy main road. These gaps should be prioritised as part of the development of well lit and surfaced routes with adequate separation from busy traffic:

- Castlenau - Hammersmith Bridge
- Sheen to Richmond – east/west along the Sheen Road/Upper Richmond Rd West
- Richmond Hill to Ham/Petersham – avoiding Petersham Rd / Star and Garter Hill – e.g. via the riverside and a safe route up/down the hill.
- Richmond Town Centre/ Richmond bridge
- Twickenham Town Centre
- Routes into Twickenham from Teddington and Hampton
- Teddington – Kingston
- Teddington – Hanworth

As a longer term ambition; a bridge alongside the district line from Kew to Chiswick would take cyclists away from the major road junctions north of Kew Bridge and route them directly to shops and workplaces in Chiswick and Acton.

The map in Fig 4 shows a proposal for a joined up “Quiet Route” cycle network largely constructed out of today’s quiet routes; coupled with strategic investments in a the “problem areas” listed above; in order to achieve a joined up network.

Key features of this map include:

- A high quality end to end A316 cycle track running through the borough.
- The Railway-side routes described in the original Mini Holland bid, joining Hampton, Teddington, Fulwell and Whitton to Twickenham.
- A complete north/south route from Kingston to Chiswick via Richmond; created by upgrading the riverside from Ham House to Richmond; allowing northbound cycling on the east side of Richmond Green; improving southern end of Kew Road; and then implementing a railway side bridge from Mortlake Rd to Wellesley Rd in Chiswick.
- Quiet Routes linking Richmond – Sheen – Barnes – Hammersmith; Richmond – Sheen – Barnes – Putney; and Richmond – Sheen – Roehampton.

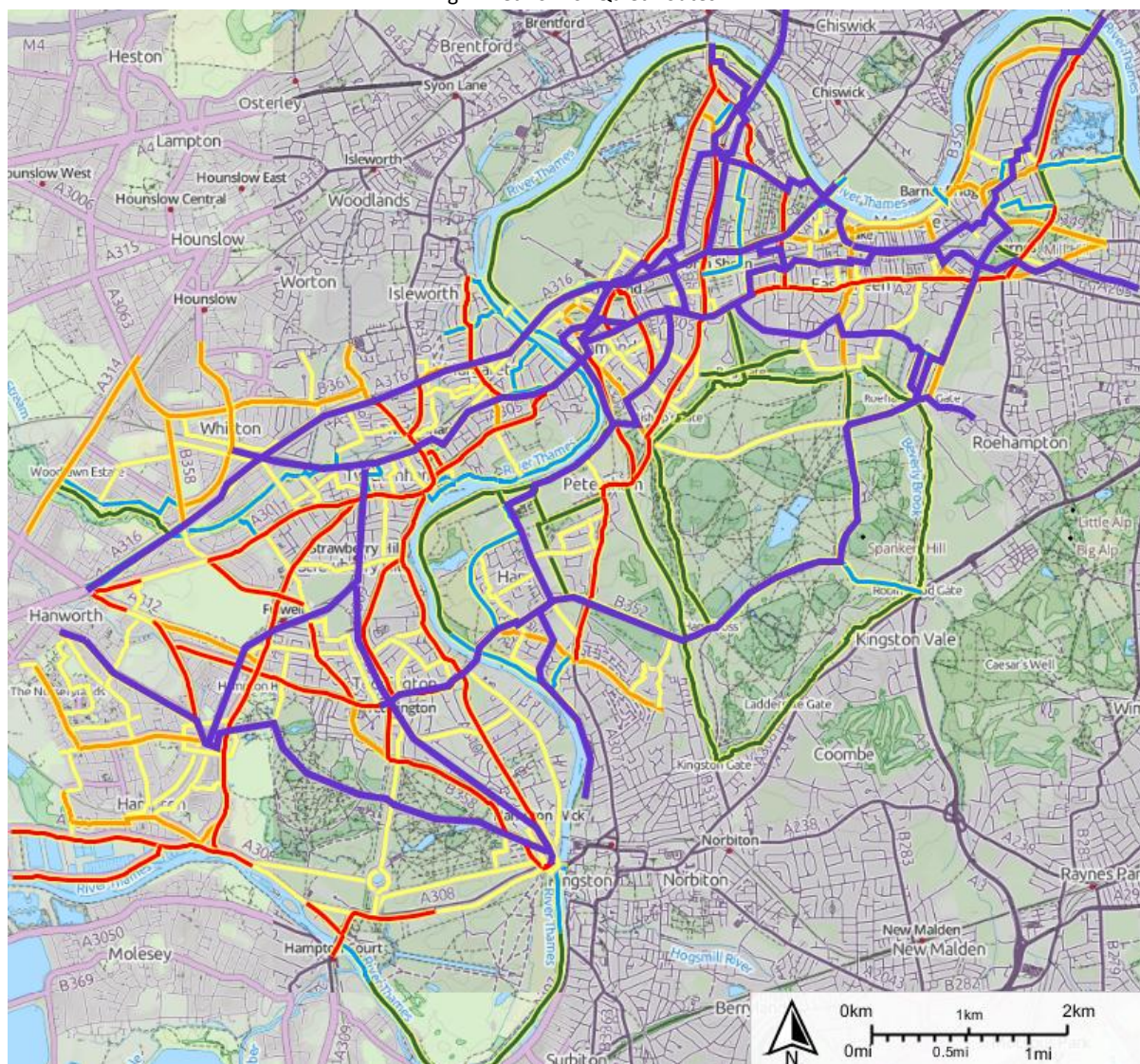
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Fig 4: Network of Quiet Routes



The two maps below give a higher zoom level and show the key areas of improvement needed to achieve this network – highlighted in yellow boxes.

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Fig 5: Key Areas for Improvement Highlighted– North Section

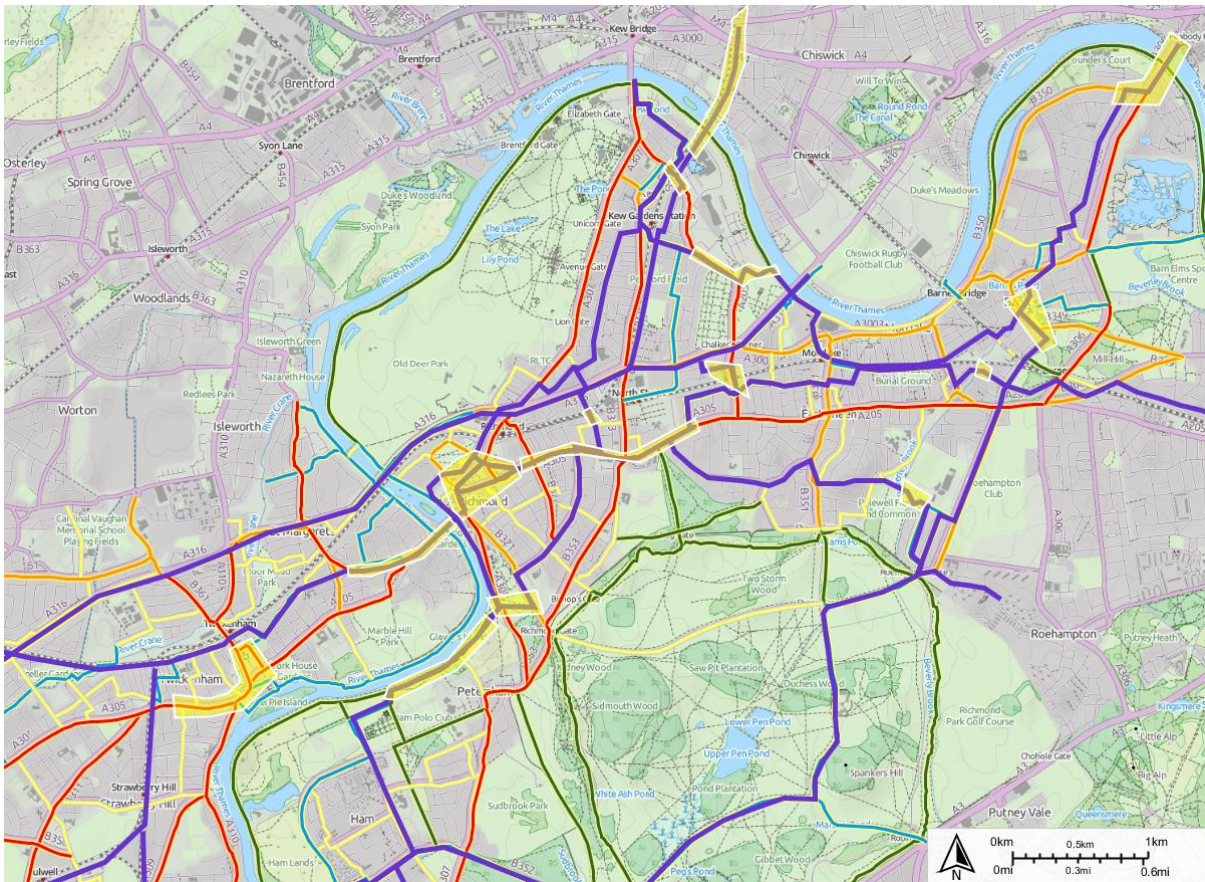
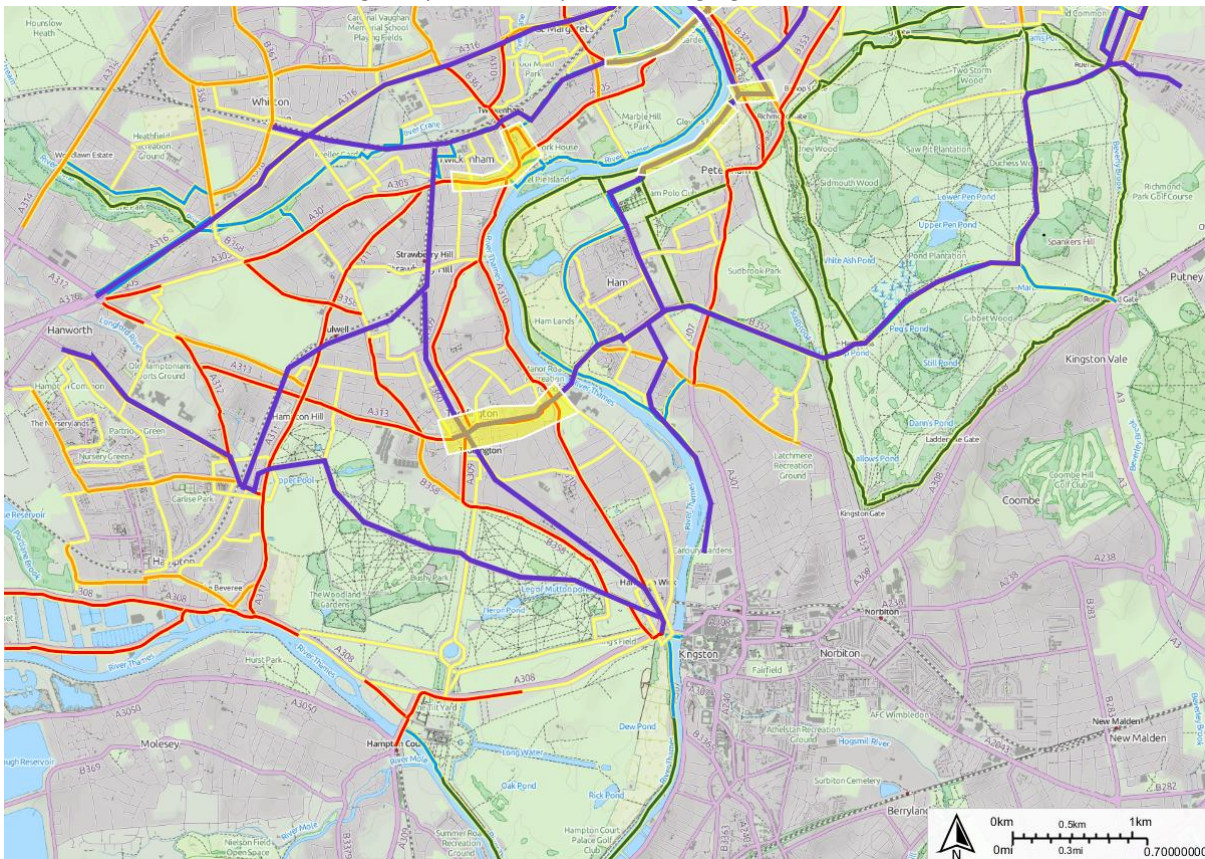


Fig 6: Key Areas for Improvement Highlighted - South



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Embed Cycle Planning Into the Mainstream.

The proposals shown in this document are intended as a beginning of a local cycle network for Richmond – there is much more to do beyond the ideas discussed here.. Aside from the mini Holland opportunity, the LB Richmond Upon Thames should build a long-term plan for sustained investment in the cycling infrastructure across the borough to build this network - as part of business as usual. Whenever roads are to be re-surfaced; reworked or there is cash to spare at the end of the year; improvements to the network should be addressed.

Ongoing Engagement

RCC would welcome the chance to engage with LBRUT further on developing cycling facilities in the borough. We are engaged in gathering data from local cyclists on areas where improvements in the public realm can be made. One of our primary tools for doing this is an online tool called Cyclescape – which allows members of the public to report areas where improved facilities are required – see <http://richmondlcc.cyclescape.org/> for a complete list of all issues logged in the LB Richmond Upon Thames area so far.

Cycle Parking

The provision of more cycle parking is a “quick win”. RCC has previously provided requests for cycle parking. A list of suggested places for more parking is given here:

Where	Details
Kew Gardens	More parking at each entrance. There’s none at Lion Gate, and insufficient at all the others
Kew Gardens Station	More parking each side of the station
Richmond Station	More parking at the front of the station
Richmond Town Centre	Throughout the town.
Richmond Green	More cycle parking needed in Richmond generally; and specifically at the east end of Richmond Green – see http://richmondlcc.cyclescape.org/issues/811-richmond-green-more-cycle-parking
Whitton	See attached document
East Twickenham	West side of Richmond Bridge at Richmond Rd / Cambridge Rd Junction; by Richmond Bridge. See: http://richmondlcc.cyclescape.org/issues/839-bike-parking-needed-st-margarets
Hammerton Ferry (Ham/Twickenham Riverside)	Parking north and south bank of Hammerton Ferry would allow cyclists to use the ferry but not have to lug their bikes on it if they are just visiting Twickenham on foot from Ham or vice versa. http://richmondlcc.cyclescape.org/issues/832-cycle-parking-for-hammertons-ferry
Teddington, Broad Street	See http://richmondlcc.cyclescape.org/issues/813-teddington-broad-street-more-cycle-parking-needed
White Hart Lane, Mortlake	There’s plenty of shops on White Hart Lane but the only bike parking is right at the northern end. There is room for more bike stands near the shops at the southern end opposite Westfields Avenue. See http://richmondlcc.cyclescape.org/issues/588-bike-parking-white-hart-lane
Sheen – corner of Palewell Park / Upper Richmond Rd	See http://richmondlcc.cyclescape.org/issues/544-sheen-cycle-parking-needed-2
Sheen – south end of Milton Road	See http://richmondlcc.cyclescape.org/issues/543-sheen-cycle-parking-needed-1