

LRAG News Update – 8 August 2023

Sustainable Travel Reference Group (STRG)

Since the last newsletter there has been no further communication from Surrey CC or The Consultation Institute. The content of the last week's news was felt to be of sufficient general interest that the editor of the Guildford Dragon, unprompted, published an editorial on LLAG's concern about the STRG process ([Action Group Unhappy With SCC Meeting on London Road Proposals](#)).

LRAG Objectives

LRAG regularly hears criticism that it is a pro-motorist, anti-Active Travel Scheme organisation. It seems timely to reassure that it is neither, by reiterating the objectives it set itself at the time of creation:

- Ensure that the new round of consultation proposed by Surrey County Council is appropriate, given the impact of both the scheme and the construction, addresses both the scheme and its implementation, and provides meaningful engagement with all elements of the community who will be directly impacted.
- Ensure that the feedback resulting from the consultation directly influences the design of the scheme, that the scheme is the best possible solution given the circumstances of London Road as an arterial route and that existing safety concerns are fully addressed.
- Ensure that the construction and diversion arrangements for the scheme take account of the needs of local residents, businesses, schools and community groups, and prioritise minimising disruption for these groups, organisations and individuals.

As was evident at the public meeting on 5th January, and in subsequent media publications, this is an emotive topic, not always debated on facts or agreed data.

When reviewing the eventual final plans at SCC drop-in events, it is important to ask oneself if the whole picture has been made available, and the balance of pros and cons has been fairly and comprehensively presented. LLAG will continue to try and make sure that "sugar-coating" is not the order of the day.

As the overarching guidance material for all Active Travel Schemes states: *Proposals must be clear and unambiguous, as detailed as possible, including good maps and drawings, and **frank about the disadvantages**, to build trust and discourage misrepresentation.*