

ECC Report from County Cllr Steel:

RideLondon

The events on 28th (GW and Chignal) and 29th June (GW, Chignal and Writtle), were well managed. The VCPs and Pedestrian crossings were in place.

On the 28th, I visited some of the businesses along the way with Cllr Lee Scott (Highways Cabinet Member). I am still receiving complaints from residents and businesses.

ECC have not signed a 5 year contract. Cllr Scott has promised me a review before any commitment. I have insisted on being part of that review.

East Anglia GREEN – from Norwich to Tilbury - UPDATE

Update on my activities in relation to the Non-statutory consultation briefing 21 April to 16 Jun 2022

I attended the Chelmsford area Webinar, the consultation event at Writtle and have read the full report and appendices.

Parish Councils

The local parishes have formed a North West Group, of which I am a member. We have met several times, and expanded to include Margaretting and Ingatestone – there are now about 10 PCs represented+ local protest group.

ECC

The ECCs response is being collated by the Growth and Development Team and they have reached out to internal stakeholders and asked for their views on the project (Highways, Flooding, Socio Economics, Landscape, Ecology etc) and once received will be incorporated into a single response.

I had not heard how this is progressing, so have asked Cllr Lesley Wagland, Cabinet Member for Economic Renewal, Infrastructure and Planning, for an update and made her aware of all of the activities we are undertaking (ECC Leader copied).

However, I met with the ECC Leader, Cllr Kevin Bentley, on 10th June and he informed me that ECC were making a response by the 16th June which opposed the overland route and wanted consultation to include the sea route.

City Council

I have raised it at the Policy Board meeting of 26th May. City Council are not ready to respond yet and have requested an extension. An extension has been granted to City Council until 16th July, and they will consider it at the 14th July Policy Board, which I will join.

MP

I have met with Kemi and made sure she is aware of all the concerns of the residents
Consequently, she has written a joint letter to National Grid, along with 5 other MPs covering Suffolk, Norfolk, Harwich, Essex, Bury St Edmunds (The full letter is copied below)
In summary, it states that they support an offshore solution, support OffSET, why was only one option presented for consultation, and Central Govt's commitment to delivering an offshore grid.



James Cartledge MP
Member of Parliament for South Suffolk



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Member of Parliament for South Suffolk

The Rt Hon Greg Hands MP
Minister of State for Energy, Clean Growth and Climate Change
Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy
1 Victoria Street
Westminster
London
SW1H 0ET

CC:
John Pettigrew, CEO of National Grid

Dear Greg,

20th May 20

RE: NATIONAL GRID'S EAST ANGLIA GREEN CONSULTATION

We write concerning the current consultation about East Anglia GREEN, a new line of 400kv pylons to carry electricity from offshore wind farms through open countryside in our constituencies.

We are concerned that the consultation does not cover the decision already made by National Grid for the new pylon run to be overground, when it was specifically chosen against a viable undersea cable route – 'Sea Link 2' (SCD2) - without any public engagement, or explanation.

We share the view of many of our constituents that, as far as is practicable, new offshore generated electricity should be transmitted offshore, making landfall as close to the target population centres as possible. That is why we are all supporters of OffSET, campaigning for an offshore grid, which we believe is firmly in the interests of business - both offshore windfarms themselves and wider interests e.g., Sizewell and Felixstowe Freeport; and would help to futureproof the network.

You will also be aware that National Grid themselves estimate savings of £6bn per year for consumers from a coordinated offshore grid. Yet, despite all of this, the 'top level' choice of overground vs undersea has been presented by National Grid as a 'fait accompli', without any public consultation. Instead, the consultation is restricted to expressing views on a narrow 'swathe' of overland routing - through precious open countryside - offering no real policy choice to our constituents.

Of course, we are all strongly supportive of the drive to achieve net zero by 2050, and the role that our East Anglian offshore wind plays in that endeavour. Nevertheless, the context is one where the Government has committed to delivering an offshore grid, and where multi-billion-pound undersea electricity cables are already being built e.g., to transport electricity south from Scotland and so protect their countryside (specifically, the Eastern and Western links, at £4bn+ cost).

Given that East Anglia GREEN involved an initial decision to reject an undersea option, and that this is meant to be a public consultation on the 'choice' of how the electricity is transmitted – in a context of a Government supporting an offshore grid – at the very least we would ask that the consultation be expanded to permit the public to express their views on the wider choice of overland vs undersea.

We thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

James Cartledge MP
Member of Parliament for South Suffolk

Sir Bernard Jenkin MP
Member of Parliament for Harwich and North Essex

Dr Dan Poulter MP
Member of Parliament for Central Suffolk & North Ipswich

Jo Churchill MP
Member of Parliament for Bury St. Edmunds

Kemi Badenoch MP
Member of Parliament for Saffron Walden

Richard Bacon MP
Member of Parliament for South Norfolk

Homes for Ukraine Scheme Update 01.06.22

Key figures:

- In the Essex County Council area there are now 947 registered sponsors, including 83 new sponsors over the past 2 weeks. The number of requests involves 2,117 individual guests, with 192 new guests registered over the past fortnight.
- 846 guests have now arrived.

Member Led Carriageway Pothole Repair Programme

Highways have launched a new Member Led Carriageway Pothole Repair Programme to address the worst pot holes of each area.

Each ECC Cllr gets to nominate 36 potholes that will be fixed between 13th June and the end of the year.

I have 10 parishes in my division, so can you each nominate 3 potholes? (If it's a close group of several, I will try and count that as one)

Your identified potholes should provide us with road names and as much as possible, precise locations. You can use maps or 'What3words' or house numbers etc to help us identify locations. These have to be carriageway potholes, and pavement defects are not included (I have asked, as I think previous schemes did include them – but not this time)

I would imagine that your worst 3 would have already been reported, so it would be useful to include the Track – It Ref number. However, if you know a repair is scheduled, don't add it to this list.

- If possible, include at least two good photographs of each defect. It would be most helpful if one photograph is a close-up of the defect, and the second one shows the position of the defect in the road, relative to adjacent properties and identifying landmarks. Please do not put yourself or others at risk when taking photographs.

- Please be as accurate as possible – include road and village/town name but also, where possible, details of house number(s) or business(es) that the defect is adjacent to.
- Please note any other useful information that you think might help us. For instance, if the road is narrow or parking is tight; and so on.
- Please note if the defect is outside a 'higher risk' area – for instance if there is a children's nursery, school, college, or care home adjacent. Local intelligence will help us plan to do the works safely.

The work will be done in 2 tranches, starting 11th July and 10th Oct, for my division. I need your input before 11th July if you want to be in the first tranche. Please stick to the worst 3 potholes. If you send me more, I will choose 3 at random.

Digigo

Digigo is a Pilot funded by Essex County Council for an initial two-year period in two separate operational areas – Braintree and Chelmsford.

The service comprises 6 electric mini-buses operating from the Braintree GRIDSERVE electric forecourt. Using the app, passengers select their pick up and drop off points, and the system automatically calculates the route, catering for any pickups along the way. The app displays 'virtual stops' near to the pick-up locations, meaning that passengers are just a very short walk away from pick-up.

I have asked some of my Parish Councils in the coverage area, if they would like a roadshow event on this:

- Digigo attended Chignal Parish Council coffee morning 1st June
- Little Waltham Digigo roadshow is arranged for 12 noon Friday 10th June in the Tufnell Hall car park
- Great Waltham is arranged for 17th June
- Broomfield is being planned
- Pleshey have requested a session

For more info - www.digigo.uk

eScooters

The Spin e-scooter trial is being taken over by a new company called TIER.

The existing e-scooters will be swapped for new ones overnight on 5 June, for launch on 6 June. (I have already noted the new scooters, which are bright green)

We will update our website, and run some social media posts, alongside a press release being issued by TIER.

Please see attached a briefing note from Spin/TIER containing further information

Highways Issues

Ford End:

Further to my statement last month that I had contacted the ECC Highways Officer who deals with DfT and asked the question about the B1008 being removed as a back up to the A120, or whether DfT would fund a speed camera – he has responded that he has asked the question of the Network Assurance team but has not had an answer yet. I have chased for an update.

Ringtail Green

I was asked at the last meeting to respond to the following:

1. Install Ringtail Green nameplate signs, incorporating a please drive slowly message, at either end of the lane
2. Pursue Quiet Lane status for the lane between Pleshey Road and the B1008 junction
3. Painted 'Slow' road markings at either side of the bend
4. Advisory road signs at either side of the bend, e.g. advisory max speed or right/left hand bend signs

I responded to all Parish Cllrs on the 26th May as follows:

On Item 1 – it was determined that this is a City Council issue, and the Clerk would contact them

On item 2 – Please see attached the LHP members Guide for Quiet Lanes and the Appendix 1 Members Guide which gives guidance on costs.

The estimated cost from the cost guide is £4,500.

I recently Chaired a working party to look at LHP operation, and as part of that, I have some actual costs, although these are quite old:

	Cost	Comments
Feasibility Design cost	£0	Covered in the Validation process
Detailed Design cost	£1,435	Includes TRO and Design Time
Procurement cost	£0	Included in Works/Implementation
Mobilisation cost	£0	Included in Works/Implementation
Works/Implementation cost	£943	Materials, labour, supervision
Traffic Management	£0	Included in Works/Implementation
Supervision	£0	Included in Works/Implementation
Road Safety Audit	£0	Road Safety Audit/Assessment
LHP Overheads (15%)	£357	HLOs + management
Ringway Jacobs Pro-rata (9.1%)	£248.81	Essex support functions + office costs
Ringway Jacobs Overhead (2.7%)	£80.54	Corporate support functions
Ringway Jacobs Profit (2.5%)	£74.58	
Total	£3,138.15	

The LHP follows a set process in terms of scheme submissions, which have to be submitted by the ECC member and first goes through a validation process (Does it meet policy, does it meet justification as per the members Guide, etc). If it passes this, it gets included in the "Awaiting Funding" list which is reviewed by the panel every February, to determine which schemes go forward for funding in the following FY. This is done by all 14 members of the Chelmsford panel - 9 of which are the ECC divisional members, 4 City Cllrs representing all of the Chelmsford area, and 1 PC rep assigned by EALC. (i.e., you have 6 members who can represent your position).

In the case of Quiet Lanes, there are 2 schemes in the "Awaiting Funding" list – GW submitted 2021, Stock submitted 2015.

Given there are 6 times the number of schemes in the system than can be budgeted in 1 year, members determine priority according to number of people benefitted, safety, traffic volumes – and consult the traffweb accident site which records serious injuries and fatalities for the last 5 years.

LHPs cannot predict where accidents will happen, so uses historic data to identify areas where the highest probability of accidents occur <https://www.essexworkstraffweb.org.uk/rtc/index.html>

At the last Feb review, I tried to get the Quiet Lane scheme on to the funded list for 22/23. However, I was in a significant minority. Here is the minutes from the meeting:

Quiet Lanes – It was recognised that to be effective these schemes needed to include speed reductions, the introduction of which was a long and costly process. They were therefore unlikely to be included in the Funded Schemes List.

There is the option for GWPC to fund a Quiet Lane. Since the above issues are about budget, rather than policy, I would hope that such self-funding could be arranged. There is a process whereby a Parish Council can fund the Highways design/implementation team. This approach means that GWPC provide the funding but Highways do the work and take the responsibility.

GWPC may think £4,500 is excessive and might think they could take on the project themselves and do it cheaper – by going direct to a roadside certified contractor. In that case GWPC would have to undertake the design, land searches, and utility searches. I would recommend against this as GWPC would still have to carry out all the stages, and would also have to take on design liability, public liability and maintenance.

On item 3 – Painted ‘Slow’ road markings at either side of the bend

I discussed this with the LHP Manager. He believes that to have SLOW written on the road, you also have to have a triangular warning sign as well.

This would be determined as part of the design process. However, it would need to get through the LHP validation process first to go to the design stage, which is unlikely to happen given that the recorded speeds were an average 22mph, 85th percentile 27mph and there are no reports of accidents in that area. These measurements were made on the straight patch as specified by GWPC. However, if GWPC wish to fund this option, the LHP Manager estimated a cost between £5K and £10K. To refine the cost estimate would need the design work to be undertaken, which is usually about a third of the cost

On item 4 - Advisory road signs at either side of the bend, e.g. advisory max speed or right/left hand bend signs

Advisory speed limits would have the same issues as Item 3 above – maybe more onerous scrutiny. The Price guide suggests that *“Change of single speed limit which is uncontentious and where minimal infrastructure is required. £15,000”*

As this is not actually a change, it may not be as high as that. Again, to refine the estimate would need a funded design.

Enforcement

Quiet Lanes and advisory speed limits are not enforceable.

GWPC states that the problem is with the outliers. Whilst such drivers may not be breaking the speed limit, it might be worth GWPC asking SERP if they would attend the area and would consider prosecuting for dangerous driving?

LHP scheme submission

There is already a Quiet roads scheme in the system sitting in the “Awaiting Funding” list – LCHE212014. It has not been removed and will be considered again next Feb.

If you want to submit schemes for the other 2 items, you need to fill in a request form and submit to me. This needs to be clear on the problem GWPC wants to address and show how the criteria of any solution suggested, is met (using the Members Guides on the Chelmsford LHP website)

Since responded the Clerk has written to me stating that he has contacted City Council who stated that the first item is not a street name and but a placed name and as you also want “Drive Slowly” it

has to go to the LHP. The clerk requested the form, which I sent, and he has filled in. The Clerk also acknowledged that GWPC may want to pay for the sign to speed things up.

Accident Broads Green

Following contact from a resident, on 17th May, I contacted SERP/Traffic Police and asked if it is possible to get some speed checks done on the rat-run route from B1008 Broomfield Road to Copperfield Road – via Chelmsford Road, Larks Lane, through Broads Green, Breeds Road, through Chignal Smealy.

Chignal Smealy is 40mph, Broads green 30mph.

I travel some of that route regularly, and I would say there is an issue around 8am/5pm – a few tickets would change things. There isn't the budget to do much else. I have an LHP scheme for Village Gateways through Chignal Smealy, but they won't be implemented until 2024 – LHP demand far outweighs budget.

Whilst I received an answer from SERP (Adam Pipe) I have not received a response from the Traffic Police coordinator he copied it to – in spite of 2 further reminder emails. I was hoping to have an interchange with her that could secure some checks in Broads Green, Chignal Smealy and Ford End. 4 weeks and no response is unacceptable and I will now be writing to the Chelmsford DCCI and if he doesn't respond, I will write to Roger Hirst.

In my view, many of the speeding problems could be best reduced by effective enforcement.