

News from Thurston Community College

Proposed cuts to free school bus provision by Suffolk County Council could result in an **additional 600 daily car journeys** to and from Thurston and Beyton. This is the worrying finding of a survey of our parents conducted to coincide with the opening of a council consultation on changes to home to school transport.

We are very aware through our close relationship with the communities of Thurston and Beyton that traffic caused by the school run is already a concern. These villages and the surrounding roads could not cope with the extra traffic – we estimate it would be a seven-fold increase from current levels. **We hope all residents will respond to the Suffolk County Council consultation to oppose the proposed changes.**

The consultation proposes three options:

1. Change to “nearest school only” wholesale in September 2019 (all students in all year groups would no longer qualify for free transport to Thurston Community College if they live closer to a different secondary school).
2. Change to “nearest school only” incrementally, from September 2019 (same as above, but existing students would continue to receive free transport while new students do not).
3. Make no changes to the school travel policy, but make savings from other Suffolk County Council budgets.

Thurston Community College will continue to oppose options 1 and 2 which we have shown will not make savings but will result in additional costs elsewhere. **Option 3 is the only way to ensure that our villages are safe for all road users and that Thurston Community College and its students continue to thrive on both campuses.**

We urge all local people to make their views known to Suffolk County Council by responding to the consultation by 28 February 2018. The questionnaire can be completed online here: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/5to16HtoS>

Full information about the consultation is available here: www.suffolk.gov.uk/schooltravel

If you want to know more about our campaign against the proposed changes, please visit the College website: <http://www.thurstoncollege.org/Information/Home-to-School-Transport/>