

Joint News release from Bath Chamber of Commerce, the Initiative in B&NES and the Federation of Bath Residents' Associations.

November 2nd 2015

BUSINESS AND RESIDENTS SAY YES TO PARK AND RIDE

The leading organisations representing the interests of residents and businesses in Bath have joined forces to make a strong case in favour of an Eastern Park and Ride for the City and they are calling on the Council to follow through with a key promise which helped them win the recent election.

It is almost unprecedented for residents and the business community to work in public so closely but they both share a serious concern that a noisy minority could de-rail the Park and Ride plan which will be discussed by the Full Council on November 12th.

Bath Chamber of Commerce, the Initiative in B&NES and the Federation of Bath Residents' Associations (FoBRA) are convinced a well-designed Park and Ride to the East of the City is much needed, whilst there is a difference in emphasis on the reasons for it.

Ian Bell, Executive Director of Bath Chamber of Commerce and the Initiative in B&NES, puts his emphasis on the economic impact of congestion.

"We were delighted that the Bath Transport Strategy, which was supported by both main political parties, put long term economic development at its heart. And a central plank was an Eastern Park and Ride. It would be quite wrong now for politicians to wobble in their determination to deliver this because of a noisy and well co-ordinated campaign by a minority of the population."

"We recognise it won't solve all our problems but it will be a valuable contribution, making it easier for staff and customers to get into the centre of the City, helping to attract new inward investment and so help to continue the development of our economy which provides jobs and salaries for local people," said Mr Bell.

Meanwhile, Robin Kerr, Chairman of FoBRA, has his focus on the impact traffic congestion has on air pollution, which is damaging the historic fabric of the World Heritage Site and also endangering the lives of the people who live in it.

"Air pollution across much of Bath, nearly all of it from traffic, is 50% or more above the safe health limit set by law and it is becoming increasingly apparent how damaging that is to people's health. Nitrogen dioxide pollution has been linked to respiratory and heart disease. It is estimated to cause 23,500 deaths each year in the UK. Bath's pro-rata share of that would be about 30 deaths per year. Pollution levels in Bath have remained consistently high for more than 10 years. On its own, this will not solve Bath's congestion and pollution problems. However, provided that long-term parking capacity is reduced in the centre to offset the new Park and Ride spaces, in line with the Bath Transport Strategy, it will have a substantial impact. It really is time to get serious about bringing pollution down." said Mr Kerr