

## **FoBRA letter to The Chronicle - Eastern Park-and-Ride**

The full Council is now to discuss the proposed eastern Bath Park-and-Ride on 12 November. The Federation of Bath Residents' Associations strongly supports the creation of the new park-and-ride.

No doubt there will be a lively debate, and objections from some of those who live to the east of Bath. However, this is about more than those in the villages close to the proposed sites. It is also about the impact of traffic on Bath. It is a difficult choice between protecting the World Heritage City of Bath and the lives of the many thousands of people who live or work there, and protecting the landscape to the east of the city.

It is clear that there is too much traffic in Bath and that it needs to be reduced. Traffic congestion spoils the experience of the World Heritage City for all its stakeholders. Free and safe movement is constrained for pedestrians and cyclists. Vibration and air pollution from traffic is damaging the very fabric of the Georgian city, while air pollution harms the health of people who live or work here.

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. It really is time to get serious about bringing pollution down.

Park-and-ride can make a major contribution to reducing traffic coming into cities, which is why cities across the country and across the world have them, and why they feature in DEFRA's strategy for tackling air pollution. Bath lacks a park and ride to serve traffic coming from the east, which is why the eastern park and ride is a central part of the Bath Transport Strategy which was approved by the full Council, and with cross-party agreement, last November. Of course the site must be designed to the highest standards and screened as far as possible.

The new facility on its own will not solve Bath's congestion problem. 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.

The current administration was elected on a promise to build an eastern park-and-ride. It is essential that they move forward on this - for the sake of the city and people of Bath.

Robin Kerr

FoBRA Chairman

Final – 3<sup>rd</sup> Nov 15