

Councillor Dine Romero  
Leader  
Bath & North East Somerset Council  
The Guildhall  
BATH  
BA1 5AW

6<sup>th</sup> July 2020

Dear Councillor Dine,

### **A Traffic Movement Plan for Bath Low Traffic Neighbourhoods**

As you know, the Federation of Bath Residents' Associations (FoBRA) brings together 33 residents' associations across Bath, with a combined membership of some 5000 across the city. Residents have welcomed the concept of introducing Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) throughout the city, and many of our member associations are in discussion with their Ward Councillors on possible LTNs in their local areas.

At the same time we believe it is vital to address the road network around LTNs by means of a comprehensive traffic movement plan. LTNs will by their nature displace traffic, which could affect other residential areas if they are not part of a carefully designed system. This could also place excessive load on main roads where air pollution is already over or close to the legal limit, and so risk the success of the Clean Air Plan. A big problem in Bath is that the main traffic routes are also residential streets. If traffic is not simply to be displaced from one residential area to another, it is essential that traffic in the city as a whole is reduced.

The attached paper, approved by FoBRA members for discussion with you, sets out proposals for a traffic movement plan. The plan would complement and interface with strategies for improving public transport, improved school travel arrangements, walking and cycling, parking, etc. The paper proposes a hierarchy of roads in the city serving different needs, providing a framework within which LTNs will sit.

We recognise that these are extremely challenging times. Money is tight. However, the plan does not call for major capital expenditure. The proposals build on existing plans and take them a step further:

- In the weeks before lockdown the temporary HGV weight limit on Cleveland Bridge dramatically reduced HGV traffic, resulting in a transformation of London Road and Bathwick Street, where traffic flowed much more freely. The plan proposes a permanent weight limit. You have already declared an aspiration to do this; the proposed traffic movement plan would provide B&NES with a powerful rationale based on the need to protect the whole of the Bath World Heritage Site, including its historic core, from traffic and air pollution.
- The Clean Air Zone (CAZ) has been designed to reduce the number of highly polluting vehicles in Bath. The CAZ infrastructure could readily be adapted for use in the proposed congestion zone in the same area.
- The proposed city centre LTN would build on the progress that has been made to improve the public realm of the city centre and the temporary measures that you have put in place to allow social distancing and encourage walking and cycling.
- You are already reviewing parking with a view to reducing traffic and encouraging more walking and cycling and other alternatives to private car access to the city.

We believe that this plan would enable the successful introduction of LTNs. More than that, it would enable this Council to tackle the problems of traffic congestion and air pollution that have afflicted Bath for so many years, supporting the B&NES policy aims of cutting traffic congestion, air pollution and carbon emissions. For far too long our beautiful city has endured the ravages of excessive traffic which has spoiled the city environment and damaged the health of its residents. Successive attempts to deal with this piecemeal have failed. Bath deserves much better.

One positive result of the lockdown has been the enormous reduction in the amount of traffic in Bath. The city has been wonderfully free of the intrusion, noise and smell of traffic. The air quality is much better. This experience is an inspiration to reduce traffic permanently. We hope that you will engage seriously with us on these ideas as a way forward to a better future for Bath. We would welcome an early meeting to discuss this.

I am sending copies of this letter to B&NES Cabinet members and the Council Chief Executive, Will Godfrey. A copy also goes to Wera Hobhouse MP.

Yours sincerely

Robin Kerr