

Danny Yee – Oxfordshire Liveable Streets

The recommendations of the Citizens Assembly are a little scattered, which is unsurprising given the format. But they gave high general support for measures to restrict car traffic and to prioritise buses and active travel. As the officers responses explain, this largely aligns with existing county policies and schemes.

Selling the vision to the public is different to providing information, and the responses to recommendations 3 and 5 don't really address the former. Providing accurate and accessible information about the details of schemes and about transport options is important, but a complement and not a replacement for political leadership. An overarching positive vision for the city and surrounds needs to be presented, showing the broad benefits of a low traffic Oxford. This is something members need to do as much as officers.

We would like to see the county pick up recommendation 11, dedicating more roads for buses, by reconsidering the circulation system of Oxford (and market towns) from the ground up. To my mind, the most obvious candidate is Magdalen Bridge / Longwall St, noting that Magdalen Bridge is already the busiest bus route in the entire UK, and the second busiest cycle route. Barring private cars from here was being considered fifty years ago.

On recommendation 10, building housing within walking distance of major facilities, there are only a few sites left around Oxford which have reasonable walking connectivity and full cycling connectivity (within twenty minutes or so of Carfax). These sites will almost certainly be built on, but they need to be built on at high density, to make best use of their advantageous location and maximise the number of people who can benefit from them. It is also crucial that city/district and county policies are synchronised to minimise car parking provision on such developments.