

Hazel Dawe – LTN decision

This Council has declared a climate emergency – and rightly so. The excessive summer temperatures we are currently experiencing and the wildfires in Europe and California are testimony to that climate emergency. We have to reduce our CO2 emissions and one way to do that is to reduce the traffic on our streets. This council must reduce traffic in Oxford, and the best most effective way to do that is traffic filters, whether as part of an LTN or part of a wider traffic reduction strategy. Not only should the council make the Cowley LTNs permanent they should do the same with the East Oxford LTNs when the time comes. To do otherwise would be to ignore your own policy.

Traffic reduction helps combat the climate emergency but it also improves health and community cohesion. Oxford is an asthma hot spot with extremely poor air quality. I cycle through the Cowley LTNs regularly – it used to be a scary experience, now it is a pleasure.

Opponents have argued that LTNs have caused traffic congestion elsewhere. They have forgotten what the traffic was like before lockdown. I have cycled Cowley road/ Oxford Road and Hollow Way frequently since 2017 – the traffic now is actually still slightly lighter than before lockdown most of the time. Every traffic jam caused by a RTC, a vehicle breakdown or roadworks is immediately blamed on the LTNs – This is clearly not true.

Some local businesses say that their turnover is down. We are currently in a cost of living crisis that is causing people to reduce their spending. SO of course businesses are struggling. But please don't blame the LTNs.

Claims have been made about emergency services being delayed – these have turned out to be incorrect or exaggerated. The ambulance service is in favour of LTNs because they understand the health benefits they bring, The fire brigade was recently delayed not because of the LTNs but because of vandalism to one of the bollards which made it impossible to operate.

Not only do we know from copious research that LTN's cause initial strong resistance among small numbers of residents which then transforms into acceptance and eventually acceptance. We have direct experience of that ourselves in Oxford. Whether it is the traffic filter in Bateman Street or that in Napier Road for example, no one living nearby would now want those – and the many other similar roads in Oxford – reopened.

My local councillor has announced that she will be asking for the Crescent Road bollard to be removed. I strongly oppose this. I have personal experience of this road before the bollard was installed. It was a road rage nightmare. She will ask for traffic calming measures to be installed. Chicanes are already in place – they have been a major cause of road rage as drivers vied to get through the pinch point first.

Please do not remove the Crescent Road bollard and please keep the Cowley LTNs in place.

Thank you