



Barefoot is a family owned Bakery with 4 sites in Oxford, Cowley, North Parade and Jericho. We have grown since our inception in 2015 and 2 employees to having 30 employees and supplying cakes to a large number of oxford based businesses as well as its residents.

With 60% of new businesses closing within the first three years and many more not surviving covid we were looking forward to a smooth couple of years trading. Having successfully fought off the Walton Street closure we felt this was possible. We now face huge inflation and a cost of living crises. And now a bus gate system that is sure to be the final nail in the coffin for many businesses. The proposed bus gates, intend to separate the city centre into 6 segregated areas. Akin to the Berlin Wall, the gates will serve to keep residents in their local community. Residents who live in these areas already have access to local amenities and do not choose to travel by car further afield unnecessarily, they will however be given unlimited use through these gates to allow this to happen. Users and residents of Oxford that do not live within the city centre will have limited access to the city centre, its businesses and facilities.

Since the installation of the LTN system, we have already seen a 40% increase in fuel costs due to the additional distance required to travel, have increased our delivery driver costs due to the extended time spent making deliveries. The additional time spent in traffic following the installation of the Bus gates will make certain areas of our business untenable.

What plans do the council have in place to support small businesses like ours that will suffer from the lack of trade if the gates are installed.

Many of our customers come to collect cakes, wedding cakes, celebrations cakes etc, these are not items that can be transported on a bike or bus.

Would the council prefer empty shops throughout the city centre rather than find a suitable way to handle the traffic that they require to keep them profitable.

From what I have seen from presentations from Cllr Beader, leaflets and information available from the council and proposing party

- 1) There has been no mention of support for small businesses that will be affected.
- 2) There has been no opinion poll of local businesses or residents showing their support of the plan. Or any questions on how this might affect them.
- 3) There has been no explanation of how the park and ride services could cope. Given the number of vehicles they are intending to take off the road and the number of new houses being built. The current and planned parks would not be sufficient.
- 4) Vans are exempt regardless of their purpose in Oxford and residence of the business or user.
 - Should we all move to vans to carry out our business rather than personal cars?
- 5) If my fuel use and emissions are up following LTNs what will they be like following the Bus Gates?
- 6) Where are the statistics showing reasons for vehicle trips in and out of the city that justify a plan such as the bus gates or that they would even work?
- 7) Buss company profits seem to be the main concern of the Lib Dem party

At the end of the day, we all want less congestion and less pollution but this is not the right way to do it. Get efficient and acceptable alternative modes of transport in place and work out a way to meet emissions targets without signing a death sentence to many businesses, jobs and livelihoods across the county.

Please put an end to this crazy proposal.

Fraser Jones

Barefoot Oxford Ltd and Oxford resident for 40 years.