

Patrick Vale  
28 Priory Road  
Littlemore  
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Re: Speech at LTN meeting 19th July 2022

Dear Councillors,

I live in Littlemore, and have found positive benefits from the introductions of the LTNs. The one we travel through most as a family is the Florence Park LTN, but we have also made use of the Cowley LTN.

The main benefit we see as a family is the ability to move around the city safely (more safely) on bikes, 'even' with the children riding themselves. It is like night and day, travelling with children on a road that is part of an LTN scheme, versus travelling on one that is not. It seems insanely dangerous to even attempt travel on non-LTN roads, and so we don't if there is any way to avoid it. And it is not just us - we have seen many families and individual cyclists, mobility scooters, wheelchair users, pedestrians, people pushing wheelchairs and prams, scooters, and even animals crossing safely. LTNs bring the physics of roads within safe limits for living beings.

Combined with the ring road cycle path, the LTNs make more of Oxford accessible to us, and the '15 minute city' - the area we can reasonably access in 15 minutes of travel time, is vastly bigger. We can access the facilities that are not present in Littlemore, and make almost all our journeys to work, school, doctor, dentist, shops etc by bike.

We also drive, and have found the traffic flows to be more predictable, and the times we are stuck in traffic jams to have reduced since the introduction of the LTNs.

The recent aggression demonstrated towards the LTN infrastructure only serves to underline its importance. It is not hard to follow a thread from the behaviour that begins with vandalism and traffic offences and becomes careless overtaking and disregard for the safety of children and others actively travelling on the road. It is a case of vulnerable road users needing protection, and I would assert that there is a duty of care towards them. They are very many, and often un-voiced. If allowing those who cannot drive a car even if they wanted to, to travel safely means addressing the belief in the primacy of private motor traffic above all others, that sounds like a solid policy decision.

I wholeheartedly support the LTNs and would like to see them continue, and also more support given to help families travel by bike, for example, by the extension of cargo bike hire schemes, and improved cycle storage infrastructure for those who don't have suitable hard standing at home. I would also like to see some reconciliation workshops to address the divisions between pro- and anti-LTN views, before the intensity of feeling from a minority of drivers spills over into targeted aggression of vulnerable road-users or LTN supporters.

With best wishes,  
Patrick Vale