

When congestion is so bad that bus companies wanting to run a bus every 15-minutes on a route have to use 18 buses rather than 14, when congestion is so bad that it regularly takes 1.5 hours to get from the city centre to Blackbird Leys something drastic needs to be done.

- For a long time, Oxford City Council has advocated the need for measures to alleviate the impact of traffic on business, residents and the environment. We have reached a point now where it is so bad that the bus network is becoming UNVIABLE, the ending of two more bus routes in the city was announced this week. We cannot allow a further deterioration of bus services. Not when 30% of our households don't own a car.

And that is the problem these traffic filters are designed to solve.

- They are a key part of the traffic reduction proposals which have been developed over several years, they form the basis of Oxfordshire's transport strategy which you have previously agreed. Traffic reduction is already baked into Oxford's Local Plan assumptions and is a fundamental part of Oxford's economic strategy adopted earlier this year.

- We know Oxfordshire's population is growing. Oxford is the economic centre for much of the county, many people commute here from other parts of Oxfordshire and beyond. The city grinds to a halt every day and unless something is done proactively to address it, things will just get worse. And, while 1 in 17 deaths are linked to air pollution we have to be serious about reducing car journeys and congestion.

- So how do we solve this problem? Oxford is a medieval city. We can't build new roads and analysis has shown a congestion charge would not produce the traffic reductions needed. So, the County Council had developed the traffic filter proposals. The City Council has worked with you helping engage with businesses, the universities, hospitals, residents and other key stakeholders to shape these proposals.

- This has resulted in the proposal you have today, with exemptions and permits that balance the absolute need to reduce traffic, with allowing business vehicles to operate and residents who can't switch to other means to drive.

- The traffic filters will free up road space to enable a viable public transport network and to make cycling and walking safer, more attractive options.

- In 2019 Oxford was the first city to hold a Citizens' Assembly on Climate Change. Its members told us they wanted us to:

- o encourage behaviour change and modal shift away from private car use
- o provide more and safer cycle routes, and
- o incentive public transport use

- We believe these proposals support all three. They are important for our environment, our health, and our economy. But most importantly we believe they are necessary to SAVE OUR BUS NETWORK. So please support them

CLlr Louise Upton
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Cabinet Member for Health and Transport