

Good evening.

My name is Hugh Dowson. I live at Powlett Court - a block of flats. From my windows, I can see the "proposed Bath Cycle Network shared use footway". I use that footway several times each day.

I'll make 10 points, please.

1. I wish to thank senior engineer Alison Sherwin, Cllr Roger Symonds, the staff at the B&NES One Stop Shop and Col Spring of B&NES for their courtesy in response to my many questions.
2. I'm delighted to live in a City where cycling is encouraged. In my youth, I was an enthusiastic cyclist. Let cycling, and safety, thrive - say I!
3. I turn, now, to the safety audit conducted between 23 November 2011 and 16 January by the Design and Projects Group of B&NES Council. Why, may I ask, wasn't that report among the documents available at the One Stop Shop during the consultation period?
4. My visit to the One Stop Shop was just before the end of the June 2012 consultation. It wasn't until **after** that that I first became aware of that audit or the report on it. When I asked Alison Sherwin why that report hadn't been available at the One Stop Shop she told me that she had (and I do not doubt it) "made the required documents for the Cycle Track Order available at the One Stop Shop". Next time there is a consultation, will things be done differently, please? Col Spring has told me that his enquiries (and here I quote) "have determined that the document was posted as Appendix 4 to a Single-Member report [...] in the Weekly List on 9 March 2012 for decision by Cllr Roger Symonds." I use the internet a lot, but had failed to find that report.
5. The Audit Team Members were two senior engineers for B&NES. Their audit included both:
  - "an examination of the drawings relating to the scheme supplied by the design office"; and
  - a visit to the site (and I quote from their report) "between 1200hrs and 1300hrs on Wednesday 23 November 2011. The weather was fine, mild and dry. The site audited included the footway which runs between Powlett Road and Bathwick Street and the footway at either end to which it links. At the time of the visit only a couple of pedestrians were seen using the footway, no cyclists were observed either mounted or pushing their machine."
6. So the audit team visited the site just once. They saw five problems and, on those 5, they note, "All of the problems described in this report are considered by the Audit Team to require action in order to improve the safety of the scheme and minimise accident occurrence." Please see their point 1.6.
7. I invite Councillors to satisfy themselves, and the public, that those 5 problems will be addressed, including the risk of -- potentially life threatening -- accidents at the Bathwick Street / cycletrack junction. On that, I refer you to the Audit Report's Problem 2.4 (on its page 3).
8. I've seen people dismount and push their cycles along the footway in question. Others cycle along it - illegally. Even so, most of those cyclists that I've seen there, cycle considerately. On Sunday 27 May 2012, however, I saw from my window at Powlett Court a male and a female --both in their late 20s-- cycle from Powlett Road into the footway and set off pell-mell towards Bathwick Street. I was astonished! Last year, when I stopped in the footway to look for something in my pocket, I was fortunate not to be hit by someone cycling directly towards me, fast, in that footway. If that cyclist hadn't looked up, I doubt that I'd have had time to leap out of his way. The consequences might have been serious. Fortunately for me and for him, he did look up, saw me, and swerved to avoid me before I had time to call out. I wasn't, at 63 years of age, upset. If I reach 73, I might have a very different reaction to such an incident. Other people, I know, have felt intimidated by people cycling on this passageway.
9. Senior engineer Alison Sherman told me by e-mail on 18 July this year that it "is the intention that improvements will be made to the path, for example, signage to make pedestrians and cyclists aware of all users".
10. There will need to be more than that. The present signs have long been ignored. If this scheme goes ahead, there will be some intimidation, rather more courtesy than intimidation, and there will, I'm fairly sure, be accidents that might have been avoided had the present status quo remained.

Thank you.