

## **A Plea For Joined Up Thinking About School Streets**

I live on what could be a school street, Charmouth Road in Bath, where Newbridge Primary School is situated. I am so pleased that the council is finally beginning to consider promoting school streets, but this action is very late and sadly demonstrates the lack of joined up thinking within the local authority as part of its journey to net zero.

I worked with children for forty years, fifteen as a primary school headteacher in two large schools, so I feel qualified to comment on issues affecting schools. I am also a member of a residents' group next to Newbridge Primary School. We requested residents' parking from 2018 but had to change our approach for Liveable Neighbourhoods. We submitted the proforma provided by BANES to our local councillors.

The word 'school' was never mentioned in that Liveable Neighbourhood proforma. Nor were the words 'child' or 'children'. However we included the school as top of the priorities in our submission.

The school street element of the bid disappeared without trace as BANES evaluated the bid. A golden opportunity to promote children's needs was lost.

We ended up with a residents' parking zone, taking little account of the school and fifteen months later i.e. now, a proposal to remove five of those new RPZ places and introduce a one way system (two way for cyclists). This scheme claims to be part of a Liveable Neighbourhood, but in reality increasing speed where children walk to school.

What does this demonstrate? Another opportunity lost, no joined up thinking, overall vision or planning.

I hope you succeed in promoting school streets. They are sorely needed but will need some thinking outside the box to make each one succeed. Too many opportunities have slipped through your fingers as a council. It's time you put children first.

John Taylor 30.04.2024