

Britainthinks

— Insight & Strategy —

B&NES Council | Citizens' Panel on Active Travel in Bath and North East Somerset

Full report | October 2022

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1. Introduction & key findings

Background and objectives

Bath and North East Somerset Council declared a climate emergency in 2019.

As part of their vision for active travel, and to promote healthier, safer and more convenient ways to travel locally, Bath and North East Somerset Council is looking to improve sustainable transport links and reduce travel demand between employment and education sites in the Claverton Down area.

The Council is committed to ensuring local citizens have their say in the principles that should guide the Council when bringing in active travel schemes in the local area.

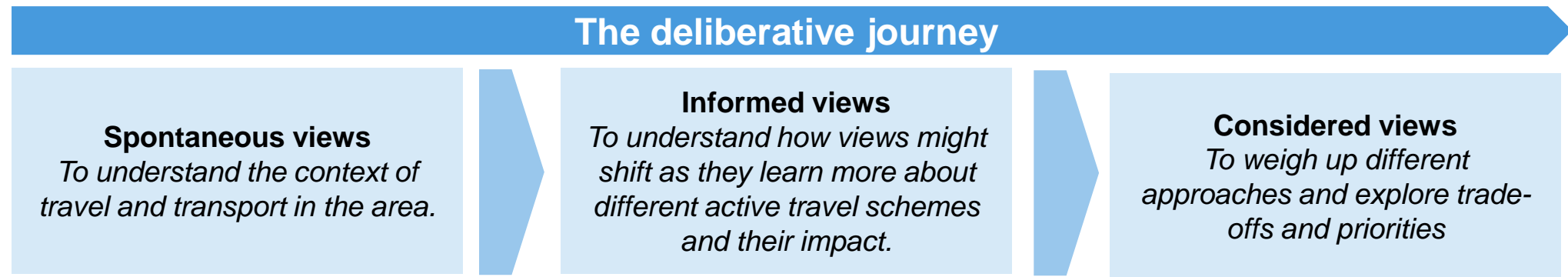


Bath & North East Somerset Council commissioned BritainThinks to run a Citizens' Panel, the Council's first venture into deliberative consultation.

Deliberative research gives participants information, time and space to come to considered views on the topic of transport, where existing knowledge is low and trade-offs are complex. This form of research takes participants on a journey in way that is highly effective for participant-learning and facilitating a 'citizen mindset'.

The sensitivity of the challenge facing B&NES Council called for a deliberative method of engagement with members of the public

Deliberative engagement allows us to understand where members of the public get to on a topic when they are given the time, space and information to consider an issue or policy debate in real depth. This is a particularly useful approach on sensitive topics where there are trade-offs to be made or where an issue affects society as a whole and therefore needs to be considered from multiple perspectives.



The core feature of a deliberative methodology is that it takes members of the public on a journey, from a point where their views are informed only by their experiences and existing levels of knowledge, to a 'citizen mindset' where their views are also informed by information and ideas from professionals/experts and from listening to and deliberating with other members of the public from different backgrounds and with different life experiences.

Outputs from deliberative engagement exercises are distinct from other qualitative and quantitative research methods

The outputs and recommendations that emerge from deliberative research:

- ✓ Are based on underlying values/drivers, not just knee-jerk or top-of-mind responses.
- ✓ Are informed by diverse views and experiences from people across the community, including seldom heard voices.
- ✓ Are rooted in the values of real people whilst being cognisant of wider policy challenges.
- ✓ Focus on points of consensus, rather than division.

Outputs and recommendations from deliberative engagement are often better trusted by local authorities and communities than other types of research, because they give voice to a diverse and balanced sample of local people, who are enabled to think deeply about an issue and about the bigger picture. Recommendations and outputs also tend to be more constructive as participants are focussed on how to *overcome* a local challenge or sticking point in a way that is acceptable to all parties.

Methodology

We conducted a Call for Evidence prior to beginning the fieldwork to ensure that a wider audience – including residents, local groups and businesses – were able to share their views and put forward arguments on active travel, and on specific active travel schemes. This consisted of 4 questions and ran between Wednesday 13th April – Monday 2nd May, collecting 737 responses.



1. Launch event and initial sessions

30-minute plenary launch event with all panellists followed by 4x 90-minute focus groups

This stage is to understand spontaneous views and the context in which residents are living right now

3x 60-minute in-depth interviews with 'hard-to-reach' residents, who find it difficult to take part in research online or need accommodations to take part

Conducted between 17th - 23rd of May



2. Online community platform

Online community consisting of 5x activities on a specialist online platform

This stage is to understand informed views and how priorities might change as they learn more about the options and solutions for active transport links

'Hard-to-reach' residents offered physical information packs reflecting content of the digital learning platform

Conducted between 25th May - 5th June



3. Deliberation sessions

5x 105-minute reconvened focus groups

This stage is to understand considered views and to weight up different approaches and explore trade offs and priorities

3x 60-minute reconvened in-depth interviews with panellists unable to attend a group

Conducted between 8th - 14th of June

Sample

27
panellists

Including 3x ‘hard-to-reach’

All local residents of Bath and North East Somerset, who interact with routes between the Claverton Down plateau and Bath city centre with varying levels of regularity.

A mix of typical modes of travel.



10 x urban



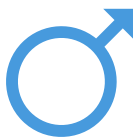
10 x suburban



7 x rural



13 x female



14 x male

ABC1	18
C2DE	9
Disabled / LTHC	7
Ethnic minority background	4
18-34	6
35-54	11
55+	10

Key findings

1. Concerns about travelling locally come to mind easily and are usually related to **congestion** on the roads and **poor public transport options**. While **active travel infrastructure is felt to be lacking** when prompted, this **rarely comes up as a spontaneous concern**.
2. Residents are **broadly positive about active travel and its health and environmental benefits in terms of air pollution**. People would personally like to walk and cycle more, but **find it difficult** if they don't feel fit, mobile or safe enough, especially up/down steep local hills.
3. While residents are also **broadly positive about bringing in specific active travel interventions** in Bath and North East Somerset, there is a **sticking point on the impact on motorists** of making space on the road for active travel schemes.
4. When potential active travel schemes in the Claverton Down area are discussed, residents raise **concerns about the Council being able to encourage someone like them to use active travel up and down such a steep hill**. They say the **uphill gradient feels too steep** for people of 'normal' fitness and **going downhill on narrow roads feels unsafe**.
5. However, there is evidence to suggest that **residents do support an active travel route on one road up the hill to make travelling actively feel safer** as well as **providing e-bikes to make travelling up steep hills feel easier and more achievable for 'normal' people**.

Residents' principles for decision-making on active travel schemes

Any new active travel schemes in and around Bath and North East Somerset should....

1. Offer an easy and appealing alternative to short car journeys.
2. Have clear and effective safety features (to reassure new cyclists especially).
3. Be connected and integrated into the wider transport network.
4. Be careful not to disadvantage those who can't easily choose active travel.

2. Residents' views on travel and transport in BANES



Residents' top-of-mind associations with travel & transport in BANES are all problems related to driving


From the driver perspective:

- Journeys are felt to take a long time, with traffic jams at rush hour, bottlenecks and congestion causing blockages.
- Driving is seen as stressful and unpleasant.
- There are complaints about lack of parking in the town centre.
- As well as complaints about poor road conditions.

“Some of the roads through/in the area are horrible to cycle or drive on because of the state of them and because of bottle-necks which cause congestion and add to the pollution in the area”.

Infrequent active traveller, 35-54



 This image was provided by a participant to summarise how they feel about travel and transport in their local area.



From the pedestrian and cyclist perspective* too, car-related problems loom large

- There are complaints about air pollution.
- And complaints about noise pollution e.g. making it hard to hold a conversation when walking down the street.
- Residents near schools (and parents themselves) say how much they dislike congestion around school drop off and pick up times.
- There are also complaints about roadworks creating obstructions and diversions in the way of cycle paths and walkways.

“The area I live in is very congested so I'm not very positive. I take my children to school every morning, it's very car heavy, at times dangerous, and air pollution is a real concern for me with children.”

Frequent active traveller, 35-54

**please note that many of the car drivers were also pedestrians and cyclists who had complaints about cars from a non-driver perspective.*

Quotes on the challenges of switching to active travel

"Anytime there's dropping off or leaving school my road becomes so congested and you can't turn around anywhere [...] Because I'm off of the main road whenever any of the bridges go out you notice it because there are so many more cars."

Infrequent active traveller, 35-54



"You have to get to look quickly, plan, and the congestion takes ability to plan away. I have to forgo walks where I could get stuck in traffic and run into a problem."

Infrequent active traveller, 55+



"I feel like you're always switching sides, there's so many of these one way passes, there's cars randomly parked on one side and then it switches to the other. It's very reactive driving, and you're signalling to others to come through, I'm not great at driving so it's stressful for me."

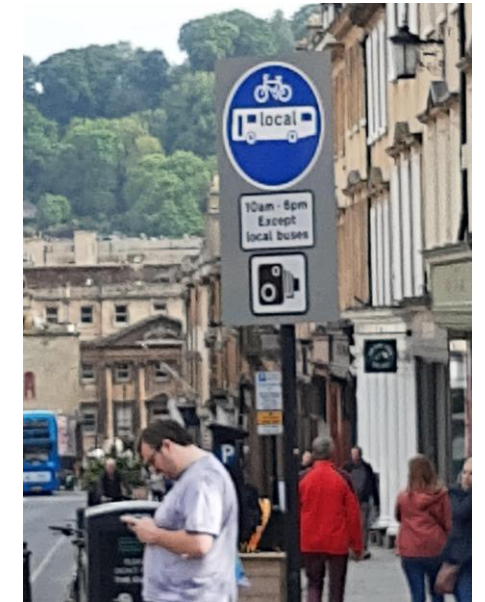
Frequent active traveller, 18-34



These are all images provided by participants.

Beyond some specific routes, the bus network in and around the city is not seen to be working especially well either

- There are some specific bus routes that have a good reputation e.g. WWB and Bath University buses.
- Otherwise, journeys by bus are seen as unreliable due to infrequent / irregular service, delays, and unexpected cancellations.
 - This is compounded as bus schedules and arrival times on apps are often inaccurate, making it hard to plan journeys or adapt to any delays / cancellations.
 - Congestion at rush hour is also seen to have a big impact on bus routes, extending travel times.
 - So relying on public transport often means having to be willing to walk in case of any issues rather than wait indefinitely.
- Bus routes are felt to be limited, especially for those outside the city centre.
- Bus tickets are seen as too expensive, especially for regular journeys or as a family, for which a car is felt to be more affordable.



"I'd still have to sit in the same traffic jam I would if I used my car. The bus doesn't actually offer a huge benefit in terms of time. It's not like we've got enough space in Bath to have dedicated bus lanes."

Infrequent active traveller, 35-54

Quotes on the current challenges with local public transport

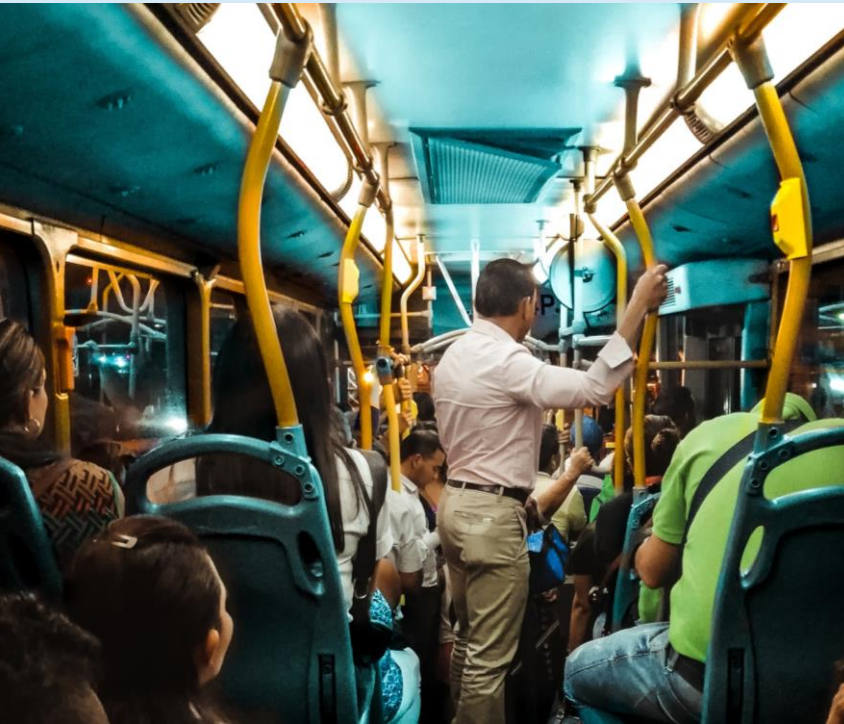
"Everyday I take the bus because I don't drive. I need to arrive and open my little shop. The schedule, the bus never arrives on time. Never. For this reason I feel frustrated."

Frequent active traveller, 35-54



"I'd like to use the bus for things that I can. ... majority of the time doesn't turn up. not delayed, just not running according to the timetable. gets delayed coming to me."

Infrequent active traveller, 55+



"Buses are very expensive. ... I think a Council like B&NES ought to be able to afford to fund the bus network and make buses more frequent and affordable."

Frequent active traveller, 55+



Those already cycling feel broadly positive, but there are safety concerns

- Cyclists on our panel say that BANES offers:
 - ✓ Good scenic cycle routes (e.g. along the canals).
 - ✓ Bike storage facilities available in the city centre.
 - ✓ Some wide and safe-feeling roads where they can share the space with cars (e.g. Bathwick Road).
- But they also say the infrastructure can make it harder e.g.:
 - ✗ Poor road conditions (e.g. potholes or manhole covers) makes cycling unsafe on some routes.
 - ✗ Hills where cars and bikes pick up speed feel dangerous.
 - ✗ Blind spots on some roads make it hard to spot oncoming traffic also feel unsafe.
 - ✗ On-street parking reduces road space in some places.
 - ✗ They have to go the 'long way round' on some routes because the short-cuts involve steps.
 - ✗ Cycle paths are broken up and not consistent, making it feel unsafe in places.



This image was provided by a participant to summarise how they feel about travel and transport in their local area.

"I take my bike if going into town. I commute to Bristol on my bike often. It isn't too bad and I enjoy it. I can usually do most things on bike or on foot."

Frequent active traveller, 35-54



Regular pedestrians enjoy the views but not the traffic alongside

They have a positive view of the:

- ✓ Good views and walking routes (e.g. National Trust footpaths).
- ✓ Scooters that are available on some routes, providing an alternative to walking.
- ✓ The pedestrianised areas of the city centre is easy to walk around.

But say they dislike:

- ✗ Walking in congested areas where there's lots of air and noise pollution and it feels unsafe.
- ✗ Walking up steep hills which leave them out of breath and sweaty.
- ✗ That some pathways are not in good condition.

"Bath is a really scenic place, which makes it quite pleasant to walk around"

Infrequent active traveller, 35-54

Spontaneous ideas for how to improve local transport focus on improving car and bus use, particularly addressing traffic



Driving

- ✓ Remove street parking on one or both sides of the road to increase road space.
- ✓ Repair potholes to make roads safer to use.
- ✓ Smaller buses for less busy times / less used routes to free up road space.



Public transport

- ✓ Improve frequency of bus services.
- ✓ Improve park and ride from the city periphery to city centre to encourage use of public transport.
- ✓ Broaden the public transport offering with trams as well as buses.
- ✓ Discounted or free bus travel for all, or for certain groups, e.g. Wessex Water staff.

"There's always a lot of parked cars [...] you've got loads of busses trying to get through and it's just a traffic jam so double yellows would free that up."

Frequent active traveller, 18-34

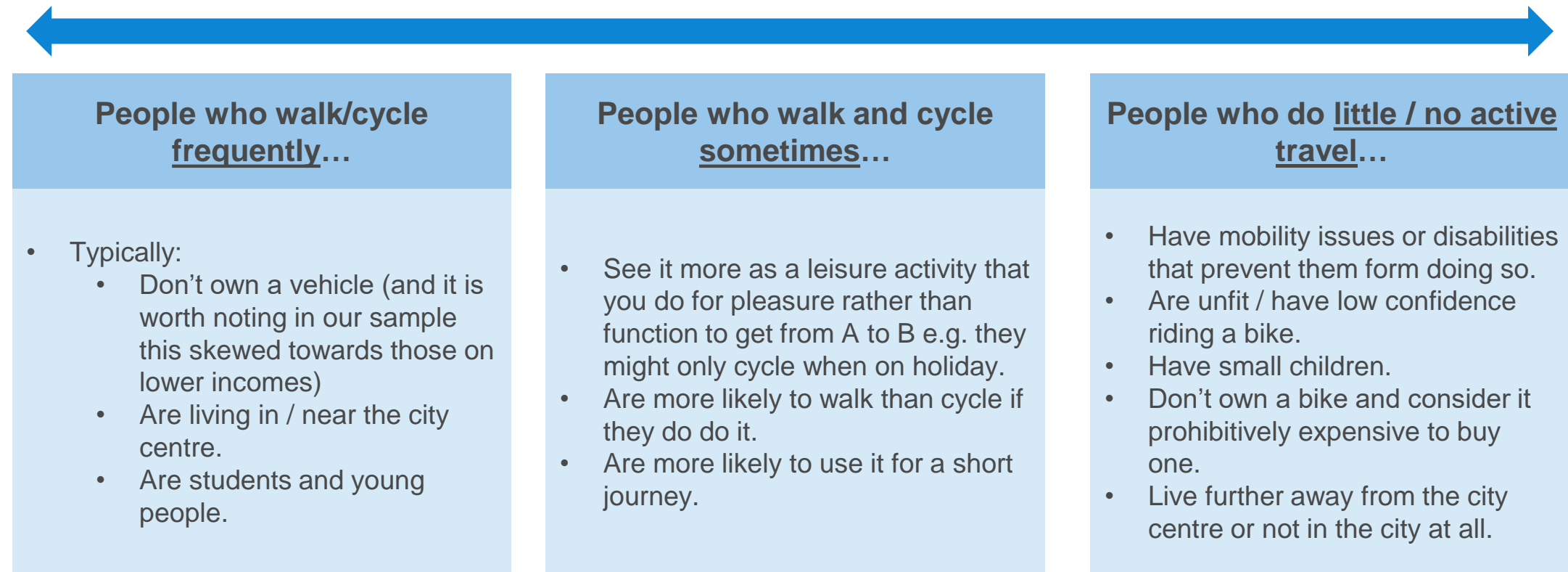
"Make buses more frequent and affordable for people and that would certainly help encourage people to maybe not to use their car."

Frequent active traveller, 55+

3. Residents' views on active travel



Active travel is less top-of-mind than other forms of transport, but most participants do it at least some of the time



"I used to use the canal system a lot to get around Bath, whether walking or as a cyclist. Even as a mother with small children I still found it to be a great way to get around, get to see the gardens, get to town, get to work quite often... [now] I've got chronic conditions unlikely to improve so I don't cycle anymore."

Infrequent active traveller, 18-34

Residents who already walk and cycle as part of their routines are sold on the benefits



Convenient

- It can make a **more flexible journey**, with participants able to bypass some common transport challenges by dodging congestion and avoiding public transport delays.

"It's a lovely walk and you can often beat the bus as well."

Frequent active traveller, 18-34



A way to enjoy the area

- On a day with **good weather**, it can be much more pleasant than being stuck in a vehicle, especially with the beautiful natural scenery in the local area.

"Usually I walk into town because I live at the top of a hill and it's a beautiful walk [...] I'm quite active so I enjoy the walk."

Frequent active traveller, 55+



Fitness and wellbeing

- Active travel incorporates regular exercise into a daily routine and feeling **physically healthier**.
- It is key for **mental health**, with scenery making it a particularly pleasant place to walk / cycle through.

"I tend to do more walking than anything else. It's convenient, it's healthy, it doesn't require any specialist knowledge or transport needs and you can do things in your own time, it can be quite relaxing."






Frequent active traveller, 55+



Low cost / free

- No cost per journey
- Not a key reason for anyone, but certainly a bonus

But strong barriers to active travel prevent people making the switch and changing their routines

 Inconvenient	 Physically hard	 Unpleasant environment	 Unsafe	 Expensive outlay
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take longer and required more effort. • Especially when travelling in a group, travelling to / for work, or carrying a load (e.g. when shopping). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not possible for disabled people. • Really hard for those not used to physical activity, especially given the hilly terrain. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congestion in busy parts of the city causes noise and air pollution. • Bad weather puts people off. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cars leaving little space for cyclists and being a danger to pedestrians. • Steep hills that make it hard to control speed. • Poor road conditions. • Walking in unlit areas at night. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial cost of a bike, especially an e-bike or e-scooters, is felt to be prohibitive.

“Going to Lidl is a common journey. I’m obliged to go by car — I have an e-bike but that’s no good for shopping.”

Frequent active traveller,
55+

“You’re not going to be cycling in heavy traffic because you’d be inhaling all those fumes.”

Infrequent active traveller, 55+

“It’s very car heavy, at times dangerous and air pollution is a real concern for me with children. My children’s school is right next to Lansdowne Lane, very busy all the time, fatal accident not too long ago due to traffic [...] Physical safety and air pollution are concerns for me.”

Frequent active traveller, 35-54

“The cost of buying an e-bike is prohibitive. I’m not unfit but no way could I tackle nearly all of the hills in Bath on a [normal] bike.”

Frequent active traveller,
35-54

Quotes on the barriers to active travel

"I have meetings to do at work and notebooks to bring. Even as a young, fit, healthy person I don't like the idea of carrying that stuff up and down the hill every day."

Frequent active traveller, 35-54



"In a busy city it makes me quite anxious cycling in the traffic and in the dark it might be much worse."

Frequent active traveller, 55+



"In the west country the weather isn't great, and I think people jump into their car at the first opportunity. I don't think there are many people that would be willing to jump on their bike and cycle up in awful weather in the darkness in the winter."

Infrequent active traveller, 35-54



These are two case studies of residents in our sample to bring to life the barriers to active travel in BANES:

Jennifer, 46

- Owns a car but rarely uses it, walking almost everywhere locally and taking the direct bus route from her home to the city centre if needed.
- Views active travel positively and feels walking is a good way to de-stress, with nice views to enjoy, and does not cause pollution.
- Almost never cycles as the road condition is too poor, and potholes make cycling feel unsafe. Also notes that bikes are no longer available to rent.
- **Thinks repairs should be made to roads to make journeys safer, with a more regular bus service uphill.**

“There are big chunks of Bath where it [active travel] could be done. There are flat bits, there's the whole area around CD where they don't really have to tackle hills.”

Samuel, 57

- Reliant on a car due to health issues, walks for leisure, but cannot use the bus due to long waiting times.
- Views active travel very positively, and used to try to walk everywhere when he was able to, but due to his physical condition is unable to rely solely on active travel.
- Concerned that any schemes might prevent disabled participants from getting around by closing key roads.
- However, less cars on the road would make his journeys faster and less congested.
- **Thinks the transport system should be more cohesive, making it easier for people to cycle and take a bus on the same route, with more reliable public transport, or a dial-and-ride scheme for those unable to walk / cycle.**

“These things shouldn't and can't be separate, you often need to go from your bike to bus or train [...] it's so hard to mix and match. You have to commit, either walk or cycle or public transport. No flexibility there.”

4. Residents' views on encouraging active travel in BANES



The need to consider changes to travel and transport in order to reduce to CO₂ emissions is spontaneously recognised

- The need to reduce CO₂ emissions in the UK was spontaneously mentioned and well understood.
 - The contribution that transport, especially car use makes to emissions was also well known.
- Many participants said they were minimising car use where possible by walking or taking the bus for **short distances, combining journeys** into a single trip, or **offering car / taxi shares** to those travelling in the same direction.

“If you could encourage more people to walk, I understand it's not possible for everyone, but it would be good for the environment and reduce carbon emissions.”

Frequent active traveller, 18-34

“I try to offer lifts to people, if I'm going further afield. If I'm getting a taxi from the train centre to the retreat centre I will always offer to do taxi shares etc.”

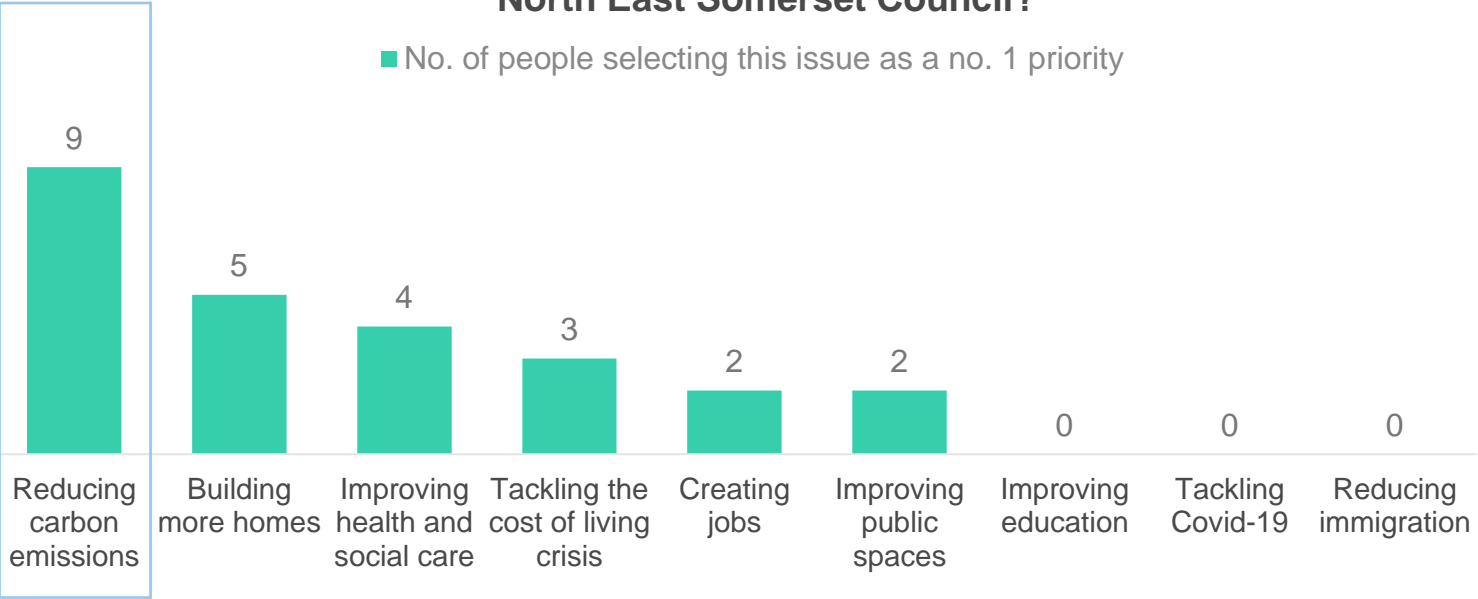
Infrequent active traveller, 55+

When prompted, the role of active transport in reducing CO₂ emissions is accepted and increasing its take-up is supported

When presented with a list of issues, reducing carbon emissions was selected as a number one priority more frequently than any other issue.

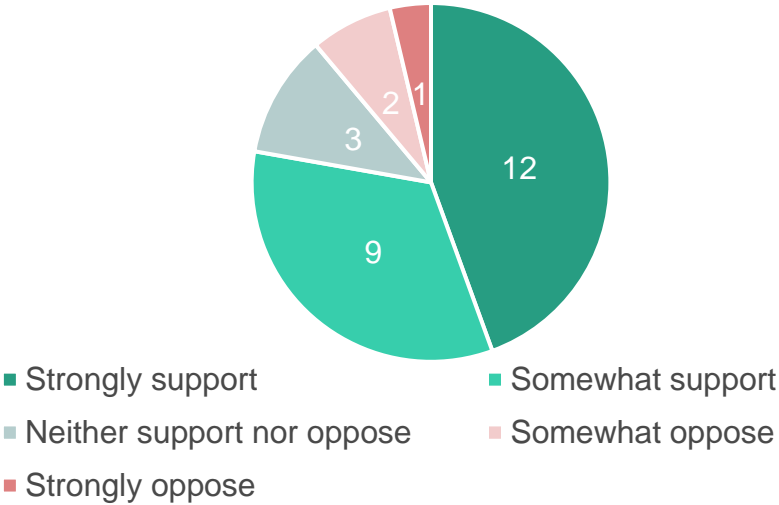
And after digesting the information on the online community, residents were supportive of efforts by the Council to drive up its use.

In your opinion, what should the top three priorities be for Bath and North East Somerset Council?



Q. In your opinion, what should the top three priorities be for Bath and North East Somerset Council? All respondents (n=27)

Having seen this information, how supportive do you feel about the Council encouraging active travel in the Bath and North East Somerset area?



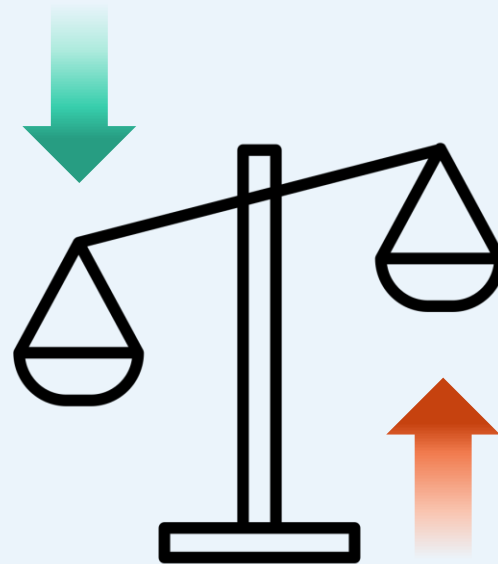
Q. Having seen this information, how supportive do you feel about the Council encouraging active travel in the Bath and North East Somerset area? All respondents (n=27)

But despite support for CO₂ reduction, it's the *personal* benefits/drawbacks that have the most impact on modal choice

When we ask residents about the reasons why they choose to travel by car instead of by foot/bike:

They talk about the personal benefits of car use ...

- ✓ Convenient – door to door
- ✓ Weather-proof
- ✓ Can easily combine journeys e.g. pick up kids on way back from work
- ✓ No planning required
- ✓ Can transport children and luggage
- ✓ Physically easy
- ✓ Feels comfortable and safe
- ✓ The norm



...and the personal drawbacks of active travel

- ✗ Takes longer
- ✗ Physically difficult or not possible
- ✗ Difficult with children/luggage
- ✗ Scary / unsafe
- ✗ Uncomfortable
- ✗ Different to normal routine

Therefore, personal mental and physical health benefits are the most effective inducement to active travel

E.g.: 'I would consider actively travelling more often, because I think it would make me fitter and healthier, both physically and mentally'

- This is felt to be the most motivating reason, because it is a personal benefit.
- Many residents felt active travel could help them get fitter and healthier.
- Dr Ian Walker's point that active travel is a way to exercise without taking time out of your day for exercise resonated well.
- The mental health benefits were seen as even more important post-pandemic lockdowns.



It is important to know that this argument did not resonate personally for residents with mobility issues. They feel walking or cycling to not be an option for them, and so would not have a beneficial affect on their physical or mental health.

"Exercise is good for your mental health as well as your physical."

Frequent active traveller, 55+

"I particularly agree that for most people expecting them to find dedicated time for exercise, to make the effort to go to the gym or even go for a jog, is not going to happen and that we need to encourage people to be more active in their day to day lives."

Infrequent active traveller, 55+

For similar reasons, reducing air pollution in Bath was seen as a motivating factor for active travel

E.g.: 'With fewer cars on the road emitting pollution, the roads would be a nicer place to walk and cycle around, and the city a better place to live.'

- Discussing the environment in terms of tangible and local impacts was more motivating than bigger picture framing around climate change.
- Local residents liked that fewer cars on the road would mean less air pollution and nicer local environment.

"I would love for there to be less air pollution and cleaner air. Would make walking around the city much nicer"

Infrequent active traveller, 35 - 54

"In the height of the pandemic when there was less cars on the roads, I was struck by how clear the sky was. Air pollution is probably slowly killing all of us."

Infrequent active traveller, 55+

Investing in active travel infrastructure and reducing vehicles on the road was seen to make active travel more attractive

E.g.: 'Bath is so congested with traffic, more people cycling or walking those shorter journeys would reduce that significantly, and make getting around Bath much easier'

- Residents felt more active travel would reduce the levels of congestion in the city, if people swapped their cars for walking/cycling. As congestion was such a big issue for them, this was a strong argument to encourage people to actively travel more.
- Residents feel that fewer cars on the road means the safer, healthier and more enjoyable it will become to actively travel around the city.



There were some who felt that more active travel would make it easier for them to travel around by car, rather than encouraging them out of their cars.

There are those who feel that even if there was better active travel infrastructure then they would not feel able to take up active travel due to mobility issues.

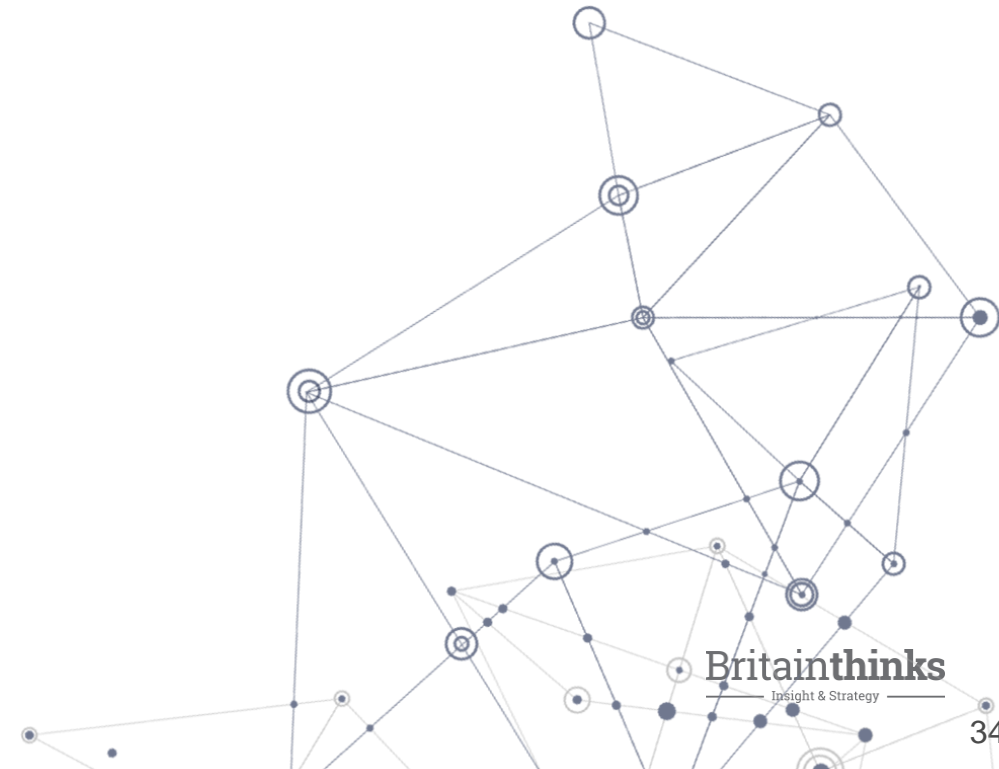
"The area I live in is very congested with traffic. It would be great if something like this could take some of those cars off the road"

Frequent active traveller, 35-45

"We have all just gotten so used to cars, I think the less we use cars and the less we are stuck in traffic the better"

Frequent active traveller, 18-34

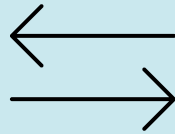
Views on active travel infrastructure



Residents' own ideas for improving active travel infrastructure were about making active travel easier and safer

"Wider pavements and cycle lanes would make it much more pleasant and feel safer for pedestrians and cyclists."

Infrequent active traveller, 35-54



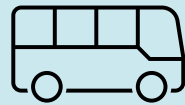
Provide **more space for cyclists** via cycle lanes or one-way routes to **make cyclists feel safer**.



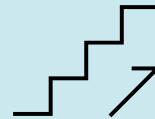
Remove / limit street parking to widen roads and reduce driving to **make cyclists feel safer**.

"Maybe a shuttle that goes up and down the hill to ferry walkers, and prams or people with bikes up and down the hill."

Infrequent active traveller, 55+



Offer **shuttle buses with bike racks** for those who prefer not to cycle uphill, but would cycle down if they could transport their cycles.



Ensure there are ramps alongside any stairs for cyclists who choose to walk uphill and cycle down.



Make **e-bikes and e-scooters** more readily available for all through rental or trial schemes, especially near hills.

Improving bicycle parking facilities is the most popular intervention, as long as accessibility concerns are dealt with

We presented participants with the planned addition of bike parking stands and lockers on the Upper Bristol Road, as an example of how improved bike parking facilities could be implemented in Bath.

Benefits

- Safe and secure bike storage will encourage more people to take up cycling, and normalise cycling in the city.
- This will also make it much easier for people to start cycling as part of their everyday journeys, like commuting.
- Several note that this sort of scheme would be very useful for students, who often live in cramped houses with little space for a bike.

“If your bike is safe, then more people would invest in bikes.”

Infrequent active traveller, 35-54

Concerns

- Bike lockers could further narrow pavements, which could have a significant impact wheelchair users.
- If parking were to be removed to make space, this would make it more difficult for drivers to park close to their destination, which is especially crucial for disabled drivers.
- Fee to use the bike lockers would make it difficult for some to access e.g. students.

“Would be a potential conflict if cycle parking furniture and parked cycles spilling out into pavement space needed for pedestrians and wheelchair users.”

Infrequent active traveller, 35-54

Introducing better pedestrian crossings is popular, but some are concerned it could increase congestion

We presented participants with different examples of pedestrian crossings that could be implemented, such as continuous footways on Upper Bristol Road, a new parallel crossing at Nile Street Junction, or widening pathways at crossing points. These were all examples of how new pedestrian crossings could be implemented in BANES.

Benefits

- Walking is more appealing as it feels safer, especially for children.
- Helps to clarify pedestrian prioritisation on the roads.

“Encourages more walking, safer crossings might slow traffic and make walkers feel safer.”

Frequent active traveller, 55+

Concerns

- Potential to increase congestion with drivers finding it more difficult to pull off turnings.
- It won't make busy roads any more appealing to walk on, as they would continue to be noisy and polluted.

“Personally I don't see this working at peak hours as a motorist could probably sit there indefinitely waiting for someone to let them out, worse still if they are turning right out of the side street.”

Infrequent active traveller, 55+

In principle, cycles lanes are felt to be a valuable change, but there are concerns about implementation

We presented participants with the planned implementation of a cycle path on Beckford Road as an example of how cycle lanes could be implemented in BANES.

Benefits

- The majority feel that if cycle lanes were built, it would encourage more people to take up cycling as a key mode of transport for them as it would feel safer (although most feel this is only if the cycle lanes are segregated and continuous).
- Residents are especially keen on the idea of more bikes and less cars on the roads as it would mean less pollution, cleaner air and a healthier Bath and North East Somerset.

“they enable cyclists to avoid being caught up in congestion... so a cycle lane would give me confidence to cycle more”

Infrequent active traveller, 35-54

Concerns

- Some are unsure that cycle lanes would be widely used, and say they needed to see more evidence of the demand.
- Some feel it is impractical or dangerous to put in a cycle lane on local narrow roads.
- The removal of parking spaces in favour of cycle lanes may negatively impact residents who want to park their cars locally and those who need to drive (e.g. people with mobility issues).

“They require a lot of extra road and in Bath we tend to have quite small roads that make this hard to achieve”

Frequent active traveller, 18-34

Proposals to remove on street parking are the most contentious, but many feel it is necessary to enable change

We presented participants with the planned moving of on-street parking on Beckford Road and Forester Road in order to make space for a cycle path.

Benefits

- Less parking along busy roads would likely reduce congestion, making traffic flows in the local area smoother.
- This would be likely to encourage more people to actively travel for shorter journeys.
- Safer for cyclists and pedestrians, with clearer visibility.

“More space for cleaner and healthier travel.”

Frequent active traveller, 35-54

Concerns

- Would unfairly penalise local residents if it prevented them from being able to park near their homes.
- Would also disproportionately impact on people with that rely on cars as they cannot travel actively.
- Could negatively impact visitors to the city, as residents feel this group is more likely to drive in to the Bath city centre and require parking.

“The issues will be that, less parking spaces will be difficult for residents and for visitors to Bath. It also alienates residents and makes them less receptive to change.”

Infrequent active traveller, 55+

After considering all the potential infrastructure changes, residents are still left with some concerns...



Safety

Residents express feeling unsure as to whether active travel infrastructure will make the local area any safer, as currently it doesn't feel particularly safe:

- Roads currently are very narrow and busy, which makes residents feel these are unsafe to actively travel along. Many residents struggle to see how active travel schemes could be implemented on these roads.
- Residents raise concerns that the cycle lanes already in place are just lines painted on the road, and so do not feel well protected from traffic.

"You would have to make sure this is all safe. Otherwise people just won't do any of it"

Infrequent active traveller, 35-54



Accessibility

Residents are concerned about how universally accessible active travel schemes could be:

- Residents raise concerns around how many people will feel that they are able to travel actively (e.g. they will feel fit or mobile enough).
- There were concerns as to how accessible active travel schemes would be in an area like BANES due to topography and narrow roads.
- Residents wanted reassurance those with mobility issues who are unable to actively travel would be considered and aren't disadvantaged (e.g. more congestion and less parking making their journeys harder).

"When this is being planned we need to start with the disabled people, make it work for them first, and I'm not sure we're doing that at the moment."

Frequent active traveller, 55+



5. Residents' views on active travel in the Claverton Down area

There is low awareness of the B&NES Council active travel strategy although most had heard of the 'North Road' scheme

- Most participants are generally aware of a proposal relating to North Road, but none were aware of other schemes.
- There is general uncertainty about what exactly the scheme would involve, but participants mention hearing:
 - Making North Road open to pedestrians or cyclists only.
 - Putting in a cycle lane on North Road.
 - Installing a bus gate on North Road.
- The sources of this information are not clear, although some participants recall seeing local press coverage or mentions on social media.
- Of those who have heard, many have also come across some debate and concerns about the scheme e.g. on the Next Door app.

"I don't know quite what the proposal was. I just know it involved improved cycle access. Quite an ongoing spat. Lot of bad feeling between cyclists and motorists."

Frequent active traveller, 55+

"I thought there had been talk of making North Road bike friendly, putting in a cycle lane or changing something about North Road. Thought I saw it in the press."

Frequent

Most participants do not have strong views about the ‘North Road’ scheme but many question the rationale behind it

- Many have concerns about displacing traffic to other roads, making them more congested.
- Some question the choice of North Road in particular, suggesting there could be better alternatives.
- There is a sense the proposals could have been better-publicised / explained to residents.
- Whatever the specific, most participants would like to see good reasoning and a clear measure of success.

“It feels experimental. It will just push traffic out and added 10 mins to the journey. Traffic won’t evaporate, just be displaced.”

Infrequent active traveller, 55+

“It will push more traffic on to other roads, so the many would be inconvenienced.”

Infrequent active traveller, 55+

When initial considering the value of an active travel scheme in this area the steep gradient is a key sticking point



Convenience

Active travel is not considered by residents to be a convenient way of travelling between Claverton Down and the city centre, and as such most would not consider it:

- Many felt the traffic in the area was not severe enough to warrant choosing to cycle or walk over driving.
- Several stated that it would be significantly slower to cycle or walk up the hill, due to the incline, than it would be to drive.

"There's so much emphasis on cycling but would anyone actually want to do it?"

Frequent active traveller, 55+



Ability

Residents often state not feeling fit enough to cycle or walk up the steep hills between the city centre and Claverton Down:

- Many residents feel that even the fittest person would struggle to cycle around this area, and that the majority would find it impossible due to how steep the hills are.
- Those we heard from felt this was an insurmountable barrier to active travel around Claverton Down.

"I'm fit enough but I would be knackered by the time I had cycled into work and then I'd have to do an 8 hour day"

Frequent active traveller, 18-34



Safety

Many of the residents we heard from said they would not feel safe walking or cycling in this area, which was felt to be a significant barrier:

- The area is considered isolated, and dark at night, which makes women in particular feel unsafe walking or cycling around here alone.
- Residents felt the steep hill would be dangerous to come down a bike on, and carries a high risk of causing an accident.

"I'm less happy cycling in the dark ... streetlights make no difference. Its safety, visibility to drivers is less, feels like a more dangerous activity."

Frequently active traveller, 35-54

The overall feeling from residents is that actively travelling from Bath city centre up to the Claverton Down plateau has even more barriers than in other areas of BANES. This is one of the areas they would be least likely to consider active travel.

In the final session, we presented participants with testimony from local residents

A local cyclist and Wessex Water employee provided us with evidence of what it is like to cycle around Bath at the moment.

Members of local residents associations provided us with evidence and testimonials about the current traffic situation in BANES and potential impact of active travel schemes.

Cycling on North Road

"North Road is the least trafficked and narrowest of the three routes."

- There is no specific cycle provision on this road.
- The narrowness of the road is further impacted by the number of parked cars along it.
- As it stands currently, the key issues with cycling along this route are:
 - Poor road condition (e.g. bumpy), which could cause a cyclist to fall off their bike.
 - Car doors being opened in your path.
 - Cars pulling out into the road in front of you.

"The road condition is dreadful – bumpy with patch 'repairs' (so-called). Fear of falling off, fear of a car door being opened in your path, fear of a car pulling out in front of you. Not good."

"From a safety point of view it doesn't feel wide enough to be a road and a car park."



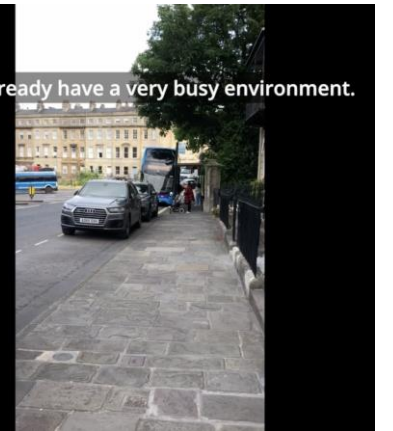
Cycling on Bathwick Hill

- Bathwick Hill is a very wide road the majority of the route, however there are some narrower areas that act as pinch points. These are made worse by parked cars, which can make it very intimidating for cyclists.
- There is a cycle lane, however it is in the widest part of the route, which is where cycling provision is least needed.
- When there are cars parked, you have to cycle further into the road, and there is a risk that cars could overtake on the left of the cycle lane, especially as there is no surface colouring to differentiate the parking area from the driving area.
- The road has been recently resurfaced, which makes it much easier for cyclists to use this route.

"Cycle lanes are most needed where there are constrictions. This cycle lane is another example of disjointed provision for cycling in Bath."



So we already have a very busy environment.



Once informed, residents are still left with questions as to how active travel in this part of BANES will work

Arguments they agreed with

- That pedestrians and cyclists should be prioritised over cars. This is felt to be fair, and that they should receive a specific prioritised route for them.
- Any city design should start with disabled people and work outwards, to ensure it is accessible for all.
- Improvements to health, the environment, and being cheaper are all considered key benefits of active travel.

“Getting fit, and not paying the ridiculous cost of petrol ... there is probably going to be less pollution.”

Infrequent active traveller, 35-54

Reassurances needed:

- How will it be **fair**?
 - Parking — what are alternatives for people who need to park (e.g. disabled people and local residents)?
- What happens if bike garages are empty so cars have less space to park for no reason?
- That schemes will make it easier to walk as well as cycle, pedestrians also need to be prioritised in any schemes.
- That the demand is there and people will use the schemes.

“I just don’t think there will be enough people that will use this sort of thing”

Infrequent active traveller 55+

Outstanding concerns:

- Plans still don’t feel very integrated — “piecemeal” — limited to certain roads rather than implementing a Bath-wide solution (e.g. cycle lanes only on some roads / some parts of roads).
- Not addressing the core problem, which is congestion. Removing parking, closing roads might make it worse.
- Main reason no one wants to cycle up the hills is because of steepness — would e-bikes or e-scooters be made available?

“Cycle lanes need to be continuous, and this would have to work in the whole city”

Infrequent active traveller 35-54

So while residents broadly welcome local active travel schemes, Claverton Down doesn't feel like the place to start

The key trade off to be made when bringing in active travel schemes is about **space on the road**, especially when it comes to cycle lanes which would more directly be taking up space from motorists.

- When it comes to the valley floor to Claverton Down area, most are sceptical that enough people would use any active travel infrastructure given the **steepness of the hills**.
- This means that making the trade off to take away space on the road from motorists for active travel schemes **doesn't feel worth it in this specific instance** because it is felt there would be so little to gain.
- The problem is exacerbated by the fact that steep hills mean wider and segregated lanes feel **even more needed for safety**, while **narrow roads** mean there is **even less space to give up**.

Many residents feel the steepness of hills could be overcome by providing e-bike or e-scooter rental schemes, provided they are affordable and conveniently located (e.g. at bottom of hill). Some also suggest free e-bike trials for the public would encourage people to use them and drive interest.

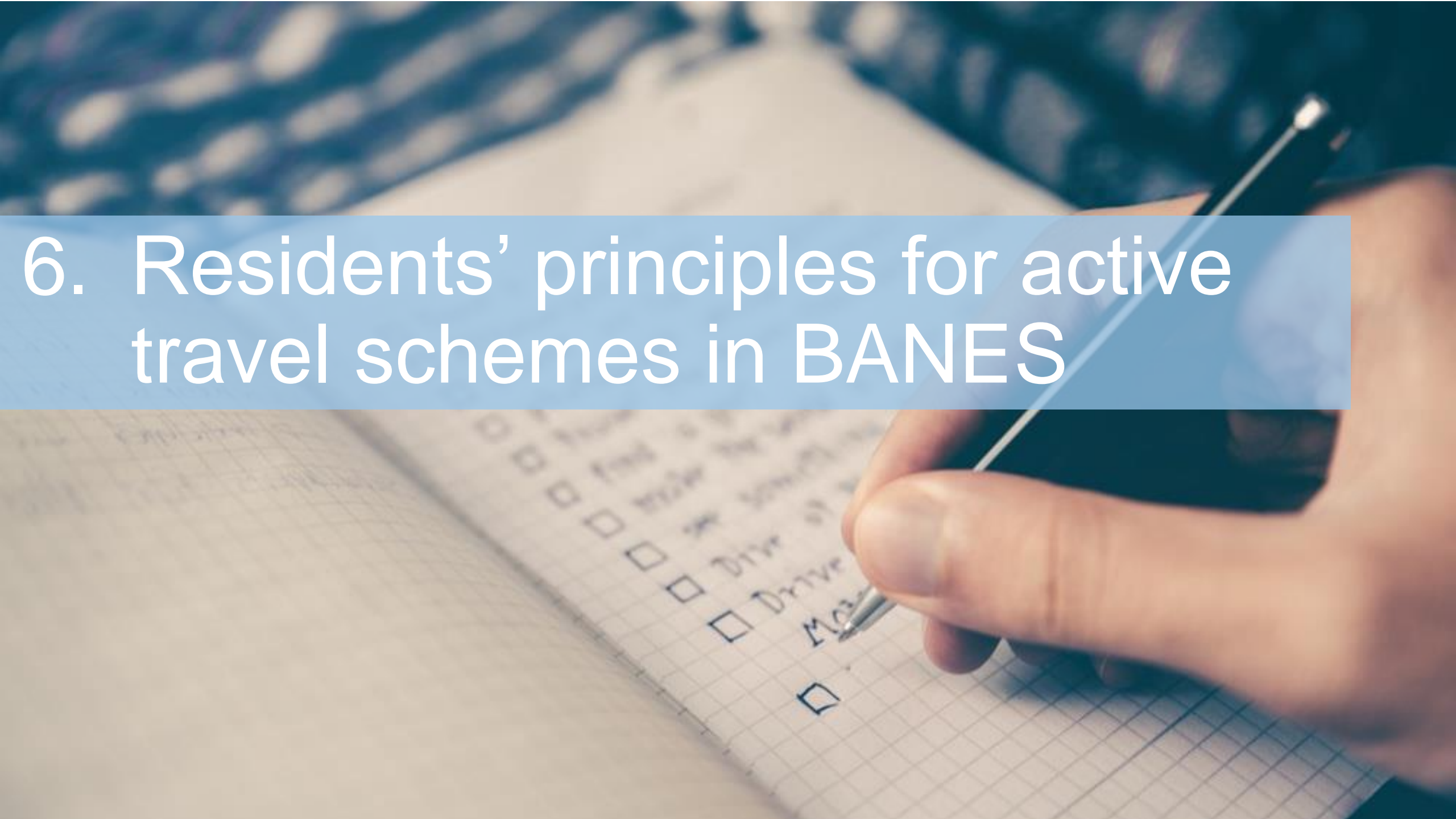
"An e-bike hire scheme would be ideal wouldn't it. That would be a game changer. The cost is a bit prohibitive."


Frequent active traveller, 45-55

"Cycle routes should focus on flatter areas. More people would use it then"

Infrequent active traveller, 55+

6. Residents' principles for active travel schemes in BANES



A decorative network diagram on the left side of the slide, consisting of a complex web of interconnected nodes and lines, rendered in a light blue color.

Following reflections on active travel benefits and drawbacks, active travel infrastructure and some specific active travel schemes, the Citizens Panel devised their own principles to guide active travel implementation in BANES.

Residents say they are open to active travel schemes in BANES as long as they follow their principles

Residents on the Citizens Panel believe that any new active travel schemes in and around Bath should....

1. Offer an easy and appealing alternative to short car journeys.
2. Have clear and effective safety features (to reassure new cyclists especially).
3. Be connected and integrated into the wider transport network.
4. Be careful not to disadvantage those who can't easily choose active travel.

Principle 1: An active travel scheme needs to offer an easy and appealing alternative to short car journeys

What does this mean?

- ✓ That schemes and routes should be demonstrably based on an evidence-based theory of change e.g. there are a large number of short car journeys being made along the route that could feasibly be replaced by cycling/walking journeys.
- ✓ Focusing cycle lanes on flatter areas to successfully encourage people out of their cars and onto a bike (especially thinking about new cyclists who may lack confidence or not be especially fit).
- ✓ Trying to ensure that making the switch doesn't cost people money or cost more than their current mode of transport.

What could it look like?

- New schemes along commuter routes between areas of housing and retail (for example).
- Routes that feel easy enough for a new cyclist to ride on e.g. continuous lanes in flat areas.
- Providing affordable e-bikes (e.g. through rental schemes or subsidies) to make cycling easier, especially on tougher / steeper routes.

"The actual hills themselves are enough to put anyone off I think. I have an e-bike, but I wouldn't cycle up on a normal bike."

Frequent active traveller, 55+

"It'll need to be easy and look good or be better than the hassle, like having to pay to take your car into town, or having traffic barriers that are quicker to get through by bike."

Frequent active traveller, 35-54

"Once you've got the quick wins that people will use regularly, then people will be on their feet or on their bike already, and then you might tackle a big hill, but you wouldn't if there was nothing else around."

Frequent active traveller, 35-54

Principle 2: An active travel scheme needs to have clear and effective safety features

What does this mean?

- ✓ That safety is a key concern, particularly for cyclists, those considering cycling or parents considering cycling for their children, and particularly on narrow and steep roads.
- ✓ Ensuring infrastructure feels safe.
- ✓ Prioritising cyclists and pedestrians on roads over motorists.

“Prioritising pedestrians over cars was an interesting way to think about it... It makes sense if you want to make a city better for travel that that's the thing to do.”

Infrequent active traveller, 35-54

What could it look like?

- Cycle lanes that are segregated (from the road) and continuous (i.e. not just on a short stretch of a road) on roads with even and smooth surfaces.
- Increasing and improving pedestrian crossings, especially in areas where children might travel.
- Ensuring cycle lanes and pedestrian crossings are well lit and clearly signposted.
- Communicating changes to the Highway Code that prioritise active travellers and making clear who has the right of way on the road.

“If the cycle lanes are bitty and not in good shape, then you will struggle to get people on it. People who like to cycle will do it, but the people who you want to be on it who are not cycling that much probably won't do it if they don't feel safe. I think it is very important to have high quality cycle lanes and not just paint on the road.”

Frequent active traveller, 35-54

Principle 3: An active travel scheme needs to be connected and integrated into the wider transport network

What does this mean?

- ✓ Taking a holistic and long-term view on plans for sustainable travel in Bath and North East Somerset – improving opportunities for active travel (both cycling and walking) and public transport where most appropriate for that mode of transport.
- ✓ Ensuring active travel infrastructure is connected and integrated to cause least disruption to users e.g. having to dismount your bike.
- ✓ Carefully planning the features and placement of schemes to minimise negative impacts on the wider transport network.

What could it look like?

- Continuous cycle lanes, and/or cycle lanes in flatter areas that connect to buses that cyclists can get on to take them up steeper areas.
- Designating a smaller number of routes as active travel routes (e.g. one of the routes up the hill) to focus any negative impacts on motorists (e.g. diversions) to one area rather than many.

“I think some of the ideas were very interesting, but I didn’t get the sense that it was very integrated. One of them was a cycle lane that ran along a short bit of road. I think if you can apply some principles across Bath, that might be a bit more interesting.”

Infrequent active traveller, 35-54

“Think about semi-active travel, maybe having a shuttle... if they had loads of space where people could walk on with their bikes or pushchairs and less seats, then you could have people cycling to the bottom of the hill, hopping on a regular bus and then cycling home from there.”

Frequent active traveller, 35-54

Principle 4: An active travel scheme needs to be careful not to disadvantage those who can't easily choose active travel

What does this mean?

- ✓ Considering people who find it more difficult, or even impossible, to travel actively at all (e.g. people with mobility issues, people who are less fit) or for certain journeys (e.g. when carrying heavy things, for longer journeys) in the design of active travel schemes.
- ✓ Ensuring those who can't easily choose active travel aren't disadvantaged by active travel schemes being put in e.g. losing parking spaces, significantly increased congestion for motorists or roads that are closed to them.

What could it look like?

- Improving the accessibility of current infrastructure e.g. removing obstacles on pavements.
- Any new infrastructure should be accessible e.g. clear signposting for those with impairments.
- Prioritising parking and allowing car passage for blue badge holders.

"The less abled should come first in design, not as an after thought."

Infrequent active traveller,
55+

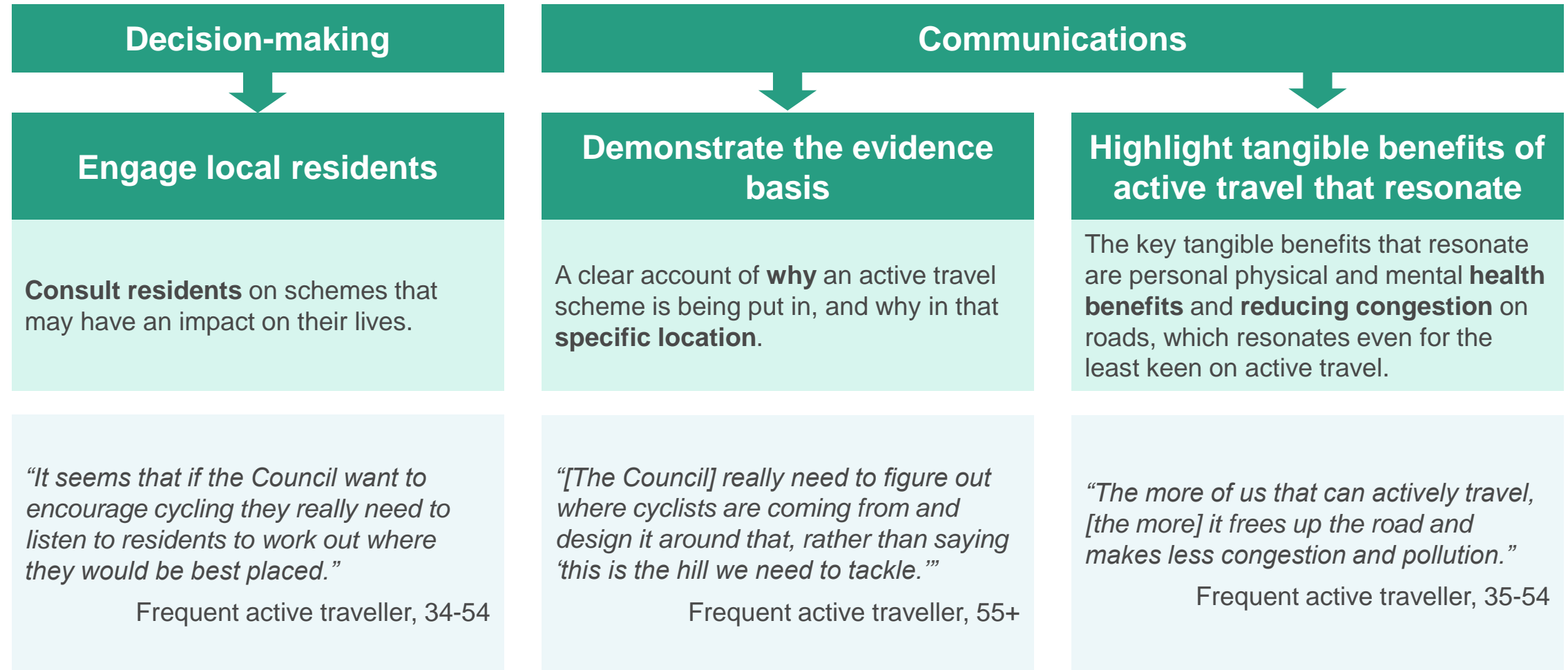
"Cluttered street space and pavements... make it difficult or impossible for those who are visually impaired, use wheelchairs or pushchairs, to pass by without going onto the road."

Frequent active traveller, 35-54

"Allow those that find it hard to get about the freedom to do so as best they can, because life for most is tough enough as it is without making things more difficult."

Infrequent active traveller, 55+

Finally, participants thought it was important to engage citizens in the process to help secure buy-in



A low-angle, close-up shot of a person's legs and feet as they climb a set of stairs. The person is wearing green athletic pants and dark sneakers with white soles. The stairs have grey concrete treads and bright orange-painted wooden risers. A semi-transparent blue horizontal band is superimposed across the middle of the image, containing the text '7. Conclusions and recommendations' in white. The lighting is warm, suggesting an indoor or late-afternoon setting.

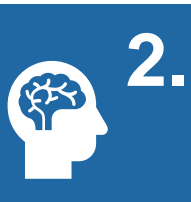
7. Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions and recommendations (1/2)



1.

There are opportunities to progress your active travel strategy with public support as there are clear push factors away from car use that can be leveraged i.e. residents have many complaints related to private car use and are aware they contribute to carbon emissions and climate change.



2.

More could be done to foreground active travel as the solution to the travel problems they are experiencing, because when thinking about tackling the transport problems active travel isn't the top-of-mind response - residents tend to think about ways that driving or public transport could be improved.



3.

Talking about active travel as a means to reducing carbon emissions will not be enough to encourage people to make the switch. It will be much more powerful to talk about the personal benefits to lifestyle, health and the local environment (especially in terms of reducing air pollution).



4.

A step-change in the public transport provision will also need to accompany a move away from cars and towards active travel to enable easy modal switches en route e.g. buses that can hold bikes.

Conclusions and recommendations (2/2)



Widespread uptake of active travel is about a mindset shift and you will need to bring residents along with you as part of the solution. There is support for the idea of creating an infrastructure to enable active travel choices, but debates about road space are not resolved and you will need to help people connect to the idea that they are being asked to swap out some of their own car journeys.



You will need to proactively support and reassure those who are anxious, scared, less able or unable to travel actively. Personal ambivalence or a feeling of being excluded leads to anger and rejection of the idea, even when there are personal benefits to be had.



Many are open to travelling more actively but nervous about cycling – accessible active travel infrastructure will be important to help encourage these residents to start cycling. The infrastructure changes that will make the biggest difference are continuous, segregated lanes on well-surfaced roads in flatter areas plus affordable e-bikes (e.g. via a rental scheme or subsidies) so that going up steeper areas feels more achievable for the average resident.

Appendix



Overview of the methodology

1. Call for evidence

**2. Launch event and
initial focus group (or
depth interview)**

**3. Online learning and
engagement platform**

**4. Final deliberative
session (or depth
interview)**

We then put out a Call for Evidence to ensure a wider audience were able to share their views with the Panel



All local citizens invited to contribute, online form

1. What is the name of the town / city / village / area you live in?
2. What do you see as the advantages of active travel, if any? By active travel we mean making journeys in physically active ways, like walking or cycling.
3. What, if anything, have you heard about the proposed active travel schemes between the Bath valley floor and Claverton Down area?
4. What are your views on the proposed active travel schemes between the Bath valley floor and Claverton Down area?
5. Which of the following types of transport do you use on a regular basis?
 - Car
 - Train
 - Tram
 - Bus
 - Bike
 - Walking
 - None of the above
 - Other



We analysed the responses and pulled out the key arguments for and against active travel that contributors were making.

We then presented a summary of the key arguments to the Panel to understand their views.

1. Call for Evidence: Summary of responses

Views of active travel

- ✓ **Physical and mental health benefits**
- ✓ **Environmental benefits** by reducing carbon emissions
- ✓ **Safer**, with less traffic / risk of road accidents
- ✓ **Accessible**, with people who can't afford to drive or take public transport able to travel more cheaply
- ✓ **Enhances local area** – less congestion, less (air / noise) pollution, greater social cohesion
- ✓ **More convenient**, with flexibility to bypass traffic and no reliance on parking spaces

- X **Inaccessible**, especially for disabled and / or elderly people
- X **Unsuited to the topography / location** — steep hills make it a challenge, and e-bikes, which are better-suited, are very expensive
- X **Impractical in some circumstances**, e.g. when carrying heavy things, travelling longer distances
- X **Expensive** to implement cycle schemes

General responses to schemes

- ✓ **Improves safety**, especially for cyclists and children
- ✓ **Reduces pollution** on chosen road
- ✓ **More convenient** for some
- ✓ **Better for people's health**
- ✓ **Improves social cohesion** by creating a community feeling with less cars on roads

- X **Skepticism about uptake:**
 - X **Topography is unsuitable** for active travel schemes
 - X **Inaccessible** for disabled and elderly people, those with young children, the elderly, and for particular journeys
- X **Worsens congestion** by displacing traffic to other already busy streets
- X **Harder to access venues** (King Edwards School, the golf course and to a lesser extent the university)
- X **Unsafe for cyclists** due to steepness — difficult / dangerous to get up the hill and to cycle down

1. Call for Evidence: Summary of responses (continued)

North Road

Participants had the highest awareness of this proposal.

- ✓ Less traffic than other routes
- ✓ Gentler gradient than other routes
- ✓ Perceived to be safer for cyclists

- ✗ Unsuitable — too steep and narrow, with an unsafe road surface
- ✗ Does not feel busy enough, and will create unnecessary detours to busier roads (e.g., Bathwick Hill, Cleveland Walk)
- ✗ Doubles car journey length for those who insist on driving
- ✗ Does not represent good value for money, as there is no evidence of demand
- ✗ Cuts off access to the school, golf course, university
- ✗ Will have no impact on commuters, and feels aimed at students specifically
- ✗ Not necessarily the most direct route from where the student population tends to live

Bathwick Hill

Lower awareness, but seen as a more viable option than North Road by those aware of both.

- ✓ Less steep than North Road
- ✓ Perceived to be alternately more / less heavily used than North Road
- ✓ Felt to provide a more direct route from student housing to the university
- ✓ Provides a wider route for cyclists

- ✗ Unsuitable — too steep for cyclists, with poor paving for pedestrians
- ✗ Unsafe in wet weather as rarely cleared of leaves
- ✗ Unnecessary — poor bus service, and already wide enough for both cars and bikes
- ✗ Serves a far bigger area than just the city centre / university, so any changes to it will have a bigger impact than other roads

Widcombe Hill

Little to no awareness, though a few support it as an alternative to the other roads.

- ✓ Closer to rail and bus stations which makes it feel a more intuitive choice
- ✓ No significant 'destinations' on the route itself vs. North Road which has three 'destinations' (King Edwards School, Bath Golf Course, second entrance to the University)

Suggested alternatives to the active travel schemes:

- Adjustments to the existing proposals:
 - Separate public transport and active travel, sending buses up North Road, and cyclists up Bathwick Hill.
 - Remove all unlimited / free street parking on North Road to create space without removing vehicles.
 - Make North Road one way (up / down the hill).
 - Install a Bus gate on North Road as previously suggested.
 - Test the schemes in a trial before implementing permanently.
- Removing barriers to cycling:
 - Reduce and enforce speed limits (including speed bumps / traffic gates) to make cycling on current routes feel safer.
 - Traffic calming” through designated cycle lanes and clearly labelled one way routes.
 - Install cycle paths elsewhere e.g. Beckford Road / Sydney Place.
 - Provide secure cycle parking on these roads.
- Other ways to reduce car use:
 - Close University car parks and start a park and ride scheme (as with Wessex Water Buses).
 - Focus on walking improvements first, rather than schemes geared towards cycling e.g. put in some Zebra crossings and improve lighting.

In the launch event, we introduced participants to the research and started to get them thinking on the topic



All main strand participants, Zoom session (30 mins)

Welcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We introduced who's in the room: us at BritainThinks and participants in the research (Panel members).
Briefing on the research	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We read out an introduction to the research from Councillor Sarah Warren (see next slide for exact text).• We explained the purpose of the research, including the role of a Citizens' Panel and how it will report its findings.• We provided an overview of the structure of the research.• We introduced standard ground rules for the sessions such as encouraging participants to ask if unsure.
Ice-breakers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Before the launch event, we asked participants to send us an image / photo that summarises how they feel about travel and transport in their local area, and one that summarises what active travel means to them. We then presented some of the responses we got in the launch event.• We also did a quick poll on the topic, asking participants to pick their top 3 from a list of possible things councils can do to encourage their local communities to reduce their carbon emissions.

The introduction to the research from Councillor Sarah Warren:

Thank you for agreeing to join our first ever Citizens' Panel in Bath & North East Somerset. This is an exciting venture into deliberative democracy for us, a way for decision-makers to hear the considered thoughts of a group of our population on an important topic.

At the council, we declared a climate emergency in 2019, and pledged to provide the leadership to enable the district to become carbon neutral by 2030. This was because we believe the devastating impacts global heating will have on the lives and livelihoods of people around the world, including on Bath and North East Somerset residents, are too serious and urgent to ignore.

We know that a third of our carbon emissions in B&NES come from transport, and there has barely been any reduction in transport emissions over recent years. We also know what we can do about this. Our research shows that car and van mileage must reduce by 25% per person per year by 2030, and that much of the remaining mileage must be in electric vehicles.

Part of our strategy to reduce vehicle mileage is to encourage people to leave their cars at home whenever possible, and to walk or cycle short and medium length journeys instead. National government has made funding available for us to provide safe cycle infrastructure on our roads, which is to be fully separated from motor vehicles so that everyone can feel safe using it.

But this is where we need your help. Because to make space on our narrow roads for safe cycling, we have to take away space that is currently allocated to driving or parking. We have found that some people are really concerned about the impact of making these important changes.

We're interested to hear all of your thoughts about reducing carbon emissions from travel in Bath and North East Somerset. But we are particularly interested to hear your thoughts on the part active travel has to play, and how active travel can be implemented in the local area by considering some of the trade offs that might need to be made in putting these schemes into place.

At the end of your discussions, the Council's Cabinet will receive a report detailing your thoughts and recommendations, and we pledge to consider them very carefully when taking decisions in future.

So thank you again for your involvement, we really appreciate your taking the time to help us in this way!

The explanation of the purpose of the research:

The role of a Citizens' Panel

A Citizens' Panel is a method of deliberation where a group of local citizens come together, usually over a number of sessions, to consider issues and options relating to a particular topic.

Panel members do not need to have specialist knowledge of the subject under consideration. They come together to deliberate by:

- receiving and discussing evidence (such as background information or reports) about the topic
- receiving information from “witnesses”, and those who hold views on the subject, as well as people with relevant expertise
- drawing informed conclusions based on the evidence they have heard

Following this process, the Panel makes recommendations for consideration by the commissioning body or bodies.

How the Panel will report its findings

Britain Thinks will prepare a report based on the recommendations of the Panel which will be presented to the Cabinet of the council.

In addition to responding to the key research questions, the report will set out wider findings and discussions of the Panel as they consider these specific questions, particularly as they relate to transport policy and access issues.

The Panel will not have the power to make binding decisions about which, if any, of the proposed active travel schemes are taken forward.

The Council's Cabinet will receive the report and give close consideration to its recommendations. The recommendations and all the submissions gathered will also be made public.

If you have any more questions on how the process works, please go to <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/citizens-panel-active-travel>

In the initial groups / interviews, we explored spontaneous views on travel in the local area, including active travel



6 main strand participants in each focus group, Zoom session (90 mins)



3 hard-to-reach strand participants, individual Zoom or phone calls (60 mins)

Introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We introduced the terms of the session• Participants introduced themselves
Spontaneous views on travel in the local area	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We asked participants about what travel looks like for them in their local area, then specifically in the area between the valley floor and Claverton Down• We asked participants what is working well, less well, or could be improved about travel locally
Spontaneous views on active travel locally	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We explored spontaneous associations with sustainable travel, and then what options there are locally• We then explored spontaneous associations with active travel, what options there are locally and views on these (including the area between the valley floor and Claverton Down specifically), and how often they travel actively
Awareness of proposals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We explored awareness of active travel scheme proposals between the valley floor and Claverton Down, and views on anything they had heard

In the interviews with the hard-to-reach participants, we covered the same topics with the addition of an introduction to the research as they had not attended the launch event

On the learning and engagement platform, we provided participants with a variety of information and evidence



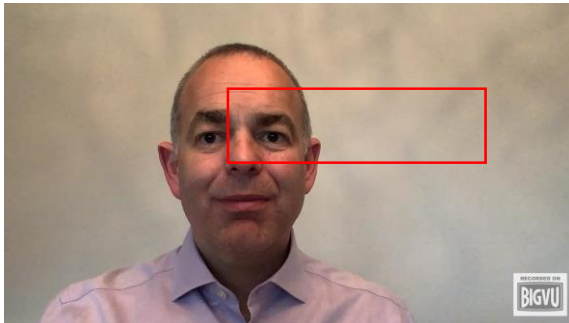
All participants, online platform* (90 mins over a week and a half)

About you	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We asked participants to tell us a bit about themselves and to reflect on the research so far• We also asked them to choose their top 3 priorities for Bath and North East Somerset Council from a list
The active travel debate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We showed a video from Chris Major, Director of Place Management at Bath and North East Somerset Council, explaining why the Council wants to introduce active travel schemes• We presented a summary of arguments for and against active travel from the Call for Evidence, and asked participants to rank them in order of effectiveness as arguments• We explored initial reactions on the active travel debate after seeing this evidence
Experts on the active travel debate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We showed videos from Dr Ian Walker, a professor of environmental psychology at the University of Surrey, and evidence from Transport for All, an organisation advocating for accessible transport• We asked participants to reflect on the arguments made by experts
Active travel schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We shared examples of active travel schemes, brought to life by examples in the local area, and explored views on these in detail
Reflections	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We asked participants for their reflections on the learning and engagement process

*We checked in with hard-to-reach participants to ensure they were happy to complete the tasks online

We presented a video from the Council and key arguments for and against active travel drawn from the Call for Evidence

Video from Chris Major



Summary of arguments made in Call for Evidence

Arguments in favour of active travel:

Being more active is beneficial for your health, both physical and mental

By limiting our use of vehicles that emit fossil fuels, we can lower carbon emissions

Investing in active travel infrastructure and reducing vehicles on the road makes it safer for walkers and cyclists

It can be more convenient to rely on walking or cycling as you don't have to worry about things like parking, public transport reliability, traffic

It is good for the community to have people 'out and about' more, and to have less noise and congestion from vehicles

Active travel can be more accessible for some people, such as people who can't drive or afford to buy a car.

Arguments against active travel:

Active travel can be more difficult or even unsafe due to physical features such as steep hills or road layout

Not everyone can travel actively, for example those with mobility issues, and active travel is more difficult on certain types of journey, such as when carrying heavy things, with young children, or travelling longer distances

There are other transport measures that can be implemented to lower carbon emissions aside from encouraging active travel, such as improving public transport

Implementing active travel infrastructure can cause issues (and can be inconvenient) for motorists such as increasing traffic and necessitating diversions which add to journey time

Implementing active travel schemes can be expensive, so if the demand isn't there, it might not be worth it

We also included some anonymised quotes from the Call for Evidence for participants to read and respond to:

"[Active travel] is a chance to slow down, focus more time in your immediate community and enjoy it on your own or by yourself. Provided that the spaces feel safe and are well surfaced it is an opportunity to improve/maintain physical and mental health."

"More people actively travelling around Bath would mean cleaner air, safer streets, quieter streets and less congested streets for public transport and emergency vehicles. Putting in safe, direct cycling infrastructure for instance makes things easier for people who cannot drive (like children) to travel and live independent lives, easier for those who cannot afford a car (like myself) to travel and enjoy the city more. I do not currently cycle in Bath because I find the heavy traffic in the city too unpleasant to cycle in."

"My concern is the large number of people who are not active enough to walk or cycle for any long stretch, or even from one part of town to another, and carrying shopping with them... I regularly take an elderly relative out. She can't use buses and is not disabled but can't walk very far or cycle!"

"For sure, cycling and walking are cheaper and healthier than motorised forms of transport but cars, buses and motorcycles are cleaner and more efficient than ever before and in a liberal democracy, people should be free to choose these options."

"Active travel has a place for short journeys, those when the weather is good and where shopping etc is not being carried but it isn't a viable permanent method of travel."

We presented participants with arguments from experts on the active travel debate

Dr Ian Walker provided us with some videos discussing the **benefits** and **challenges** of active travel

We also provided participants with information from Transport for All about the challenges and barriers to active travel for disabled people, and people with mobility issues

Physical

The most immediate barrier facing disabled people who want to make active travel journeys is the **inaccessibility of street space**, and problems with **physical infrastructure** – both walking infrastructure and cycling infrastructure.

Access can be restricted by anything interrupting easy transit along walkways or pavements, including:

- **Cluttered pavements** with bins, signs and other obstacles make it difficult to navigate for those with mobility or visual impairments.
- **Pavements that are steep, uneven or bumpy**, are difficult to traverse in a wheelchair, or can be trip hazards. A lack of dropped kerbs can make entire sections of pavements impossible to access for those in wheelchairs.

Inaccessible cycle infrastructure is cited as one of the biggest barriers to cycling. The majority of the UK's cycling infrastructure is designed with a standard two-wheel bike in mind, on the assumption that the rider is able to dismount and lift their bike where necessary. This can mean that:

- **Narrow cycle lanes, cycle lanes with a step or large kerbs, and non-continuous or joined up cycle routes** are very difficult to access for those using trikes, handcycles and other non-standard cycles.
- **Poor cycle path quality**, with speed bumps, potholes, or that are **too steep or have a steep/uneven camber** can be dangerous for a non-standard cycle to use.
- There is also a **lack of storage for non-standard cycles**, meaning it can be much harder to commute.

Medical

There are some instances where **active travel is simply not an option** for a person due to their specific needs.

Even if all other barriers were removed, some individuals would still have to rely on a car as their only means of transport because of an **impairment or access needs** (for example, needing to avoid contact with bacteria/viruses, or requiring heavy medical equipment).

Financial

Many disabled people require **specialist equipment** to facilitate active travel. Specially adapted bikes can cost anything between **£3500 - £8000**, making this a huge barrier to being able to use active travel routes.

There is also a **lack of non-standard cycle hire schemes**, meaning there is little opportunity for aspiring cyclists to 'try before you buy'.

For those who are able to afford, find and acquire an adapted cycle, **maintaining the equipment** can also be difficult and costly.

Attitudinal

Cycling is not thought of by many people as an option if you are disabled. A **lack of education, resources and visibility of disabled cyclists** means many disabled people often do not consider cycling an option for them.

We provided information on potential features of active travel schemes with an example from the local area: cycle lanes

Using cycle lanes

- Cycle lanes are lanes on the road that only cyclists are allowed to use. They are intended to improve safety for cyclists and other road users by maintaining distance between cyclists and motor vehicles. Cyclists do not have to use cycle lanes if they don't want to, and are free to use the rest of the road if they prefer.
- There are different types of cycle lanes, including:
 - **Segregated cycle lanes**, which are separate from the road and from pedestrians and are allocated for cyclist use only. They can have two lanes to allow cyclists to travel in both directions, or only one, and may be physically separated from the road e.g. by a kerb.
 - **Integrated cycle lanes**, which are part of the road or footpath.

We'd now like to show you a local example of a cycle lane that is being brought into an existing road, Beckford Road.

We are including this example to help you think about what a cycle lane might mean for a road local to you, and what the benefits and drawbacks are in real life of bringing in a cycle lane.

We have included a map of the plans for Beckford Road to give you a broader view of the changes. There is more information on this on the Council's website if you want to find out more.

Please read the information below and then answer the questions.

Cycle lanes continued

Beckford Road

Here is a local example of a cycle lane that is being brought into an existing road, Beckford Road. We are including this example to help you think about what a cycle lane might mean for a road local to you, and what the benefits and drawbacks are in real life of bringing in a cycle lane.

- The Council is planning to bring in a cycle lane on Beckford Road.
- It will be on the north (uphill) side of Beckford Road.
- This cycle lane will have 'light segregation' from other road traffic through cycle lane separators, as shown in a similar example below:

The Council is planning to bring in a cycle lane on Beckford Road. It will be on the north (uphill) side of Beckford Road.

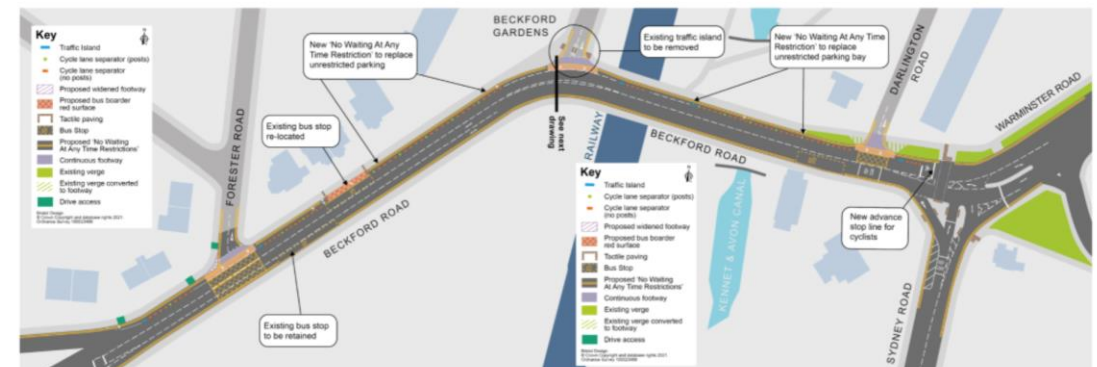
This cycle lane will have 'light segregation' from other road traffic through cycle lane separators, as shown in a similar example below:



The cycle lane will also have a 'bus stop boarder' so that cyclists can stay in the cycle lane, even if there is a stationary bus, as in the example on the left.

Pedestrians will have to cross this when they get onto or off a bus, but they will have priority over cyclists. To ensure that cyclists slow down and look out for bus users, there will be textured paving and a ramp when approaching a bus stop. The cycle lane surface will rise to match the pavement at bus stops, so that access to buses doesn't cause additional problems for wheelchair users or buggies.

Map showing proposed changes to Beckford Road



We provided information on potential features of active travel schemes with an example from the local area: pedestrian crossings

A **Zebra crossing**, the only type of crossing where pedestrians automatically have right of way. Drivers should look for people either standing at the kerb looking to cross, or already walking on the crossing, and stop to let them cross, waiting for them to reach the other side of the road before continuing.

A **Pelican crossing**, which incorporates traffic lights to signal to drivers and a push button on either side of the road for pedestrians. Pedestrians press a button at the side of the crossing, and after a while, the traffic lights change from green to red, signalling for drivers to stop.

A **Puffin crossing** is similar to the Pelican crossing – but the main distinction is that the pedestrian signals showing the green person and red person are on the same side as the pedestrian and are usually mounted on the same pole as the push button. Puffins also use sensors to detect when people are waiting to cross and if there is anyone on the road.

A **Toucan crossing**, which is designed for both pedestrians and cyclists. These are usually found along cycle-ways and unlike other pedestrian crossings, mounted cyclists can legally cross.

Pedestrian crossings continued

We'd now like to show you a local example of pedestrian crossings that are going to be improved on an existing road, Upper Bristol Road.

We are including this example to help you think about what improving pedestrian crossings might mean for a road local to you, and what the benefits and drawbacks are in real life of this.

Please read the information below, including a map of the broader changes (please click the image if you want to zoom in), and then answer the questions. There is more information on this on the Council's website if you want to find out more.

The Council is planning to make a number of improvements to make road crossings safer on Upper Bristol Road. This includes:

There are lots of ways to improve pedestrian crossings.

One is putting in a **continuous footway**. This is a relatively new method of giving people priority over vehicles, where side roads join main roads. The level of the road surface at the junction is raised to the same height as the pavement, with gentle ramps for drivers.

- The road surface also changes, to give the appearance that the pavement continues across the entrance of the side road. There are also 'give way' lines to show vehicles they have to give way to people crossing.

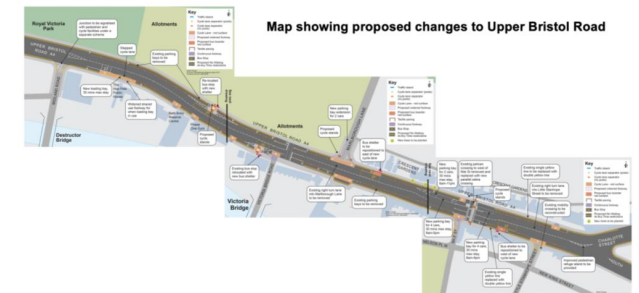
Please see an example of a continuous footway to the right:



1. Providing continuous footways at each of the side road junctions with Upper Bristol Road within the scheme, except at Marlborough Lane and Little Stanhope Street. This is because these junctions experience heavier traffic, including frequent buses, which means they are less suitable for continuous footways. As a reminder, an example of what this could look like is on the right.



2. Replacing the pelican crossing at the Nile Street Junction with a new parallel Zebra crossing (an example of what this might look like is shown on the right) and relocating it to the east of the junction. This will allow both pedestrians and cyclists to cross and create space for car parking at the widest point of Upper Bristol Road.



3. Widening the pavements on both sides of the junction. This will narrow the road and slow down traffic that is turning in, making it easier and safer for pedestrians to cross. You can see an example of what this might look like below.



We provided information on potential features of active travel schemes with an example from the local area: bicycle parking facilities

- Bicycle parking facilities provide cyclists with a place to store their bike. Having the right facilities in place is important for cyclists to be able to store their bikes in a convenient and secure way.
- There are different types of bike parking facilities, including cycle parking stands (image 1) and bike lockers or 'hangars' (image 2)



Example 1: Bike parking stands



Example 2: Bike lockers or 'hangars'

Bicycle parking facilities continued

We'd now like to show you a local example of bicycle parking facilities that are going to be improved on an existing road, Upper Bristol Road.

We are including this example to help you think about what improving bicycle parking facilities might mean for a road local to you, and what the benefits and drawbacks are in real life of this.

Please read the information below, including a map of the broader changes, and then answer the questions. There is more information on this on the Council's website if you want to find out more.

The Council are planning to provide 6 cycle parking stands along Upper Bristol Road, like the below:



The Council will also provide one or two secure, on-road bike lockers, depending on the level of demand. These are secure, covered facilities that can only be opened by people who have subscribed and have access to the lock. They are particularly useful for people who have nowhere to store a bicycle at home. There would be a small annual fee which would be used to cover the cost of the upkeep of the locker. An example of what this might look like is shown below:



Map showing proposed changes to Upper Bristol Road

We asked participants to draw conclusions about the local impact of active travel schemes and develop principles to guide implementation



All main strand participants, Zoom session with breakout groups (120 mins)



3 hard-to-reach strand participants, individual Zoom or phone calls (60 mins)

Introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">We introduced the terms of the sessionParticipants introduced themselves
Reflecting on the learning platform	<ul style="list-style-type: none">We asked participants about the arguments they'd engaged with on the learning platform and their thoughts on the active travel schemes they'd learnt about.
Local impact of active travel schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">We showed participants evidence from a local cyclist and asked participants to consider the impact of cycling-related active travel schemes on cyclists and other people living, working and travelling in the area.We showed video testimony from 3 local residents' association members (Mark Hynes, Chair of North Road Residents' Association and Jeremy Boss, Chair of Widcombe Hill Residents' Association and a third person who has not consented to have their name shared publicly) to help our participants consider the impact of active travel schemes on people who live nearby to them. The testimonies were related to <i>any</i> proposed active travel schemes the local residents had heard of, rather than focusing on specific routes.
Developing principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">We asked participants to come up with a set of overall principles the Council should consider when implementing active travel schemes in the local area.

In the interviews with the hard-to-reach participants, we covered the same topics

This is the evidence from a local cyclist who works in the area on what it is like to cycle around Bath (1/4)

Cycling on North Road

"North Road is the least trafficked and narrowest of the three routes."

- There is no specific cycle provision on this road.
- The narrowness of the road is further impacted by the number of parked cars along it.
- As it stands currently, the key issues with cycling along this route are:
 - Poor road condition (e.g. bumpy), which could cause a cyclist to fall off their bike.
 - Car doors being opened in your path.
 - Cars pulling out into the road in front of you.

"The road condition is dreadful – bumpy with patch 'repairs' (so-called). Fear of falling off, fear of a car door being opened in your path, fear of a car pulling out in front of you. Not good."

"From a safety point of view it doesn't feel wide enough to be a road and a car park."



This is the evidence from a local cyclist who works in the area on what it is like to cycle around Bath (2/4)

Private & Confidential

Cycling on Wellsway

- Whilst this route is the furthest from Claverton Down, this cyclist feels it's the easiest to get up on a bike. There is a lot of road space, and part of it has a cycle lane.
- However these cycle lanes are disjointed, and unsafe in areas:
 - The cycle lane begins after the more hazardous narrow part of the road (see top right).
 - Unruly vegetation has grown over into the shared path.
 - The cycle lane ends abruptly, with cyclists told to dismount.

"Would you like your 10 year old to cycle on the road here? A guy I met on this day was trying to find a safe route to cycle to school – unsurprisingly he said no to the road itself for his 10 year old."



This is the evidence from a local cyclist who works in the area on what it is like to cycle around Bath (3/4)

Cycling on Bathwick Hill

- Bathwick Hill is a very wide road the majority of the route, however there are some narrower areas that act as pinch points. These are made worse by parked cars, which can make it very intimidating for cyclists.
- There is a cycle lane, however it is in the widest part of the route, which is where cycling provision is least needed.
- When there are cars parked, you have to cycle further into the road, and there is a risk that cars could overtake on the left of the cycle lane, especially as there is no surface colouring to differentiate the parking area from the driving area.
- The road has been recently resurfaced, which makes it much easier for cyclists to use this route.

“Cycle lanes are most needed where there are constrictions. This cycle lane is another example of disjointed provision for cycling in Bath.”



This is the evidence from a local cyclist who works in the area on what it is like to cycle around Bath (4/4)

Cycling on Widcombe Hill

"Of the four routes, this is the hardest because the steepest part is at the top and it is almost as steep at the bottom."

- At some of the very narrow pinch points, there is parking which can exacerbate this more. Upward-bound cyclists might be wobbling or meandering a bit so need more room and downward-bound cyclists can go much faster than many drivers allow for.
- The road surface is decent, but less so for the steep part at the top.
- There is also no cycling provision along this route, which can make it feel very intimidating, especially if you are trying to get up the hill with a car behind trying to pass.
- At the steepest part at the top, there are warning signs for cyclists to slow down as there is a sharp bend. Drivers go quite quickly here, which is intimidating for an upward-bound cyclist.

"This is not a hill to recommend for someone new to cycling. An ex-student said he did it as a commuter to the university but he didn't do this route from choice and wouldn't do it as a leisure rider."





Thank you

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