

Statement for the Council Re. Wells Rd

I have lived off the Wells Rd for more than 20 years, bringing up 2 sons, working in the centre & putting up students at one time in my house and so experiencing at first hand very active service of dealing with this road.

It has always been a problem, .but over the last 5 or 6 years, like all other roads, it has become increasingly over loaded & fast.

The only zebra crossing that has been in place is way up the top, near the bend going to Bear Flat. This is much too far away to be of any realistic practical use to anyone walking down from Holloway or Carlton Gardens through the various pathways that are further down the hill from the crossing. This is also the case for the rows of houses (many of them B & B's) & St Mary's Buildings that are all much further down the hill.

To use this crossing would mean---

going up a considerable hill, away from where you want to go, cross the road, then walk back down the hill to get into the City.!

Human beings don't do this.!

Certainly it was impossible to get children to do this.

The alternative is equally difficult. It means---

walking along the high pavement (against the Council open land, covered in shrubs & trees (not a safe way at night for anyone) and again away from the Lower Bristol Rd direction, then walking under the miserable , frightening underpass to get to the centre and back to the Bristol rd offices etc.

Also not a safe way for anyone to walk.

The existing crossing was infact put there particularly for the old Beechen Cliff School when it used the building on the Wells Rd This is now closed!

This existing crossing is **very little used by anybody else.** (A survey would confirm this)

It is too high up for the people walking down from the top roads from the various steps & pathways that are a lot further down the Wells road.

Most people using these routes, then cross the Wells Rd at a **logical point** opposite the next set of steps and paths on the near side of Wells Rd that lead down to the Lower Bristol Rd.

Many people have highlighted this problem over the years. There was the argument that it is not dangerous enough, even though there have been many accidents over the years. (Particularly 2 small girls badly hurt)

Now we have a fatal accident!, and when you watch the risks people take (there are many impatient young men who use this route) an accident was and **is** inevitable.

There was a proposal & agreement for a new crossing about 4 years ago.

It was part of a bigger scheme to deal with the appalling danger posed by homeless people living under the railway arches at the lower end of Wells Rd. The path through the railway tunnel is the way used by most people walking into Town (including all **the tourists** staying in the B & B's on the Lower end of the Wells Rd) and it was a truly horrible experience.

The plan was, (with the co-operation of Railtrack) to upgrade the tunnels, (use a bigger tunnel for the path, light it, clean and paint it,) and enclose the dangerous cellars so that they couldn't be used for living in
. The path would then follow up the slope on the existing pavement to a new, practical, safe, zebra crossing of the Wells Rd+.

In the end, for some unfathomable reason Railtrack would not respond to the Council, the immediate danger was resolved by putting up a forbidding, iron fence to stop intruders and although the infrastructure for a crossing was laid when the road was resurfaced (this must be on plans) It co-incided with a new Authority in Bath and we never got the crossing.

Now we have had a fatal accident at exactly this spot!

The additional benefit for installing a crossing that is used by many people is that the constant use would stop the traffic, the crossing warning signs would slow the traffic and we would get a reduction in the terrific speeds that vehicles do up & down this road.

There are several official surveys that have been done over the last few years which were circulated..

The top speed recorded was 90mph!!

Apart from the "racers" one of the worst culprits for speeding down this road are the Park & Ride busses!

As the top crossing is hardly ever use, there is no interruption to the traffic along this inviting, wide hill.

A new crossing would certainly serve this purpose as well.

Cameras would serve it even better!!

Meryl Stannard
March 2008