

## **BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET**

### **MINUTES OF CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL MEETING**

Monday 23rd February 2026

Present:- **Councillors** Andy Wait, Duncan Hounsell, Hal MacFie, Karen Walker, Malcolm Treby (in place of John Leach), Dr Eleanor Jackson, Tim Ball (in place of Alex Beaumont), Toby Simon (in place of Anna Box) and Joanna Wright (in place of Saskia Heijltjes)

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#### **192 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### **193 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

#### **194 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Councillor Leach gave his apologies and was substituted by Councillor Treby

Councillor Beaumont gave his apologies and was substituted by Councillor Ball

Councillor Box gave her apologies and was substituted by Councillor Simon

Councillor Heijltjes gave her apologies and was substituted by Councillor Wright

Councillor Jackson attended the meeting as the Labour member (current vacancy).

#### **195 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

#### **196 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN**

There was none.

#### **197 ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS - TO RECEIVE STATEMENTS, PETITIONS OR QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF THIS MEETING**

The Chair invited the following members of the public and Councillors to make 3 minute statements:

- Ward Councillor Elliott
- Ward Councillor Hodge

- Ward Councillor Roper
- Ian Wilson (against) – statement attached to the minutes
- Rachael Hushon (for) – statement attached to the minutes
- Theresa Franklin (for)
- Bethany Claus Widick (for) – statement attached to the minutes
- William O Connell to read Olivia Webb statement (against)
- Robert Parker (against) – statement attached to the minutes
- Tim Spratt (against) – statement attached to the minutes
- Neil Billett (against)
- Neil Dickinson (for) – statement attached to the minutes
- Malcolm Baldwin (for) – statement attached to the minutes
- Will Honey
- Anne Pearson (for) – statement attached to the minutes
- Richard Brown (for)– statement attached to the minutes

## **198 LIVEABLE NEIGHBOURHOODS: LOWER LANSDOWN EXPERIMENTAL TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER (WL)**

The Chair invited the lead call in member, Councillor Colin Blackburn to make his statement setting out the reasons for the call in of the decision (the statement is attached to the minutes).

Panel members asked the following questions:

Councillor Wright noted that Councillor Blackburn had mentioned process, predetermination, lack transparency and governance and asked why these things were important in this case. Councillor Blackburn stated that Winifreds Lane was introduced late and was not included in earlier community workshops. There was a lack of consultation around Winifreds Lane.

Councillor Wright asked why residents in lower-income areas such as Julian Road had not spoken today and asked if Councillor Blackburn had information on this. Councillor Blackburn stated he could not explain the absence of those voices but noted that areas affected include dense social housing and schools.

Councillor Wright asked if there was any representation from the school. Councillor Blackburn stated that he could not find any.

Councillor Hounsell asked if there is any evidence that Cabinet predetermined the outcome. Councillor Blackburn stated that there are a number of factors such as the community workshops did not include Winifreds Lane and restrictions on public speaking at Cabinet.

Councillor Simon stated that there is reference in the pack that there had been engagement with St Andrew's School and Kingswood School.

Councillor Jackson asked about financing of the scheme. Councillor Blackburn stated that she would need to ask the Cabinet Members.

Councillor Treby asked if Councillor Blackburn is against the Winifreds Lane aspect alone. Councillor Blackburn stated that he was not against closure per se but it is about finding a solution as he believes the current design is unsafe and does not meet intended objectives.

Councillor Wait asked why Councillor Blackburn believes George Street is more polluted despite reports of reduced congestion. Councillor Blackburn stated that congestion reduction does not equate to reduced emissions.

Councillor Wright asked what changes/mitigations could be made if the decision is referred back. Councillor Blackburn stated that no mitigations were made regarding the last Liveable Neighbourhood scheme.

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The Chair invited the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Transport Strategy – Councillor Joel Hirst and the Cabinet Member for Communications and Community - Councillor Manda Rigby to make their statement.

Panel members asked the following questions:

Councillor Jackson asked how much the scheme has cost taxpayers, for example - the 5,280 first-class letters. Councillor Hirst stated that the costs are set out in the Single-Member Decision report. The programme is funded through WECA and consultation and postage fall within that allocation.

Councillor Wright stated that some residents had been surprised by the ETRO. Councillor Rigby stated that a lot of effort has gone into contact with resident's associations, schools and residents and the website is consistently updated. We have been overwhelmed at the volume of people getting involved and have listened to/read everything.

Councillor Wright stated that there appears to be no active travel data for Sion Road, despite heavy displacement. Is this an omission. Councillor Hirst explained that this scheme has the strongest evidence base of all of the schemes.

Councillor Wright noted the deprivation data for this ward, she asked why the area was selected for a livable neighbourhood. Councillor Rigby stated that the selection followed a rigorous process with WECA, considering potential impact, community requests, willingness to engage, and suitability for active travel improvements.

Councillor Wright stated that some residents describe unsafe conditions outside Kingswood School. She asked what data has been collected. Councillor Hirst stated that all safety issues raised have been reviewed by engineers and officers. Mitigations for the school exit are acknowledged and will be explored, but these sit outside the scope of the Call-In.

Councillor Wright asked if a comprehensive road safety audit been completed. Councillor Hirst stated that it had. We are satisfied that road safety has been assessed in line with standard Council processes.

Councillor Jackson asked why the three schemes were linked. Councillor Hirst stated that the combined package was developed through co-design. The three measures work collectively to limit through-traffic movements from the south towards the A46/M4 corridor.

Councillor Treby asked if the scheme would still be successful without the proposed mitigations. Councillor Rigby stated that, based on the evidence, the scheme meets its objectives without requiring mitigations. Proposed additional measures are enhancements and would be subject to consultation.

#### Councillors Rigby and Hirst made their closing statements

Councillor Blackburn made his closing statement (attached to the minutes)

#### Panel debate

Councillor Simon stated his support for dismissing the Call-In on the basis that a lawful and thorough process had been followed.

Councillor Ball supported this and stated that the procedure was followed.

Councillor Hounsell stated that he had heard the balance of arguments, he could not see any evidence of a lack of proper process.

Councillor Wright stated that she was concerned about the schools and pollution. She stated that the reason behind liveable neighbourhood schemes was to support the poorest in our communities. She stated that she was disappointed in the process and the Panel.

Councillor Jackson stated that there were other solutions to Winifred Lane. Tourism is vital and will be affected and taxi fares will rise as a result.

Councillor Treby stated that the Winifreds Lane area is at issue, he knows the area and it is used as a rat run. He stated that 72% is a significant majority and it is a shame that mitigations cannot be looked at.

#### Panel Decision

Following a motion from Councillor Simon, seconded by Councillor Ball, the Panel dismissed the call in (6 for/1 against/2 abstentions). The decision shall then take effect immediately.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.

The meeting ended at 1.00 pm

Chair(person) .....

Date Confirmed and Signed .....

**Prepared by Democratic Services**

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I am speaking as a representative of the Heart of Lansdown Conservation Group.

We do not debate the Gay Street and Catherine Place ETRO decisions. **But** the Winifred's Lane ETRO decision is irrational using flawed interpretations of data from the reports, data which is at odds with the Statement of Reasons for the trial.

Let me cover a number of important points.

The views and concerns of local residents have been ignored. The council's own report shows 72% opposition from respondents within the trial area. In the case of the Sydney Road/Sydney Place ETRO decision, Cllr Elliott stated that *"Crucially, the panel heard that 72% of those living inside the Liveable Neighbourhood support it."* Why is the same logic not being applied in this case where 72% are in opposition?

The decision document states that an objective is to disperse traffic over a wider area. Traffic has **not** been 'dispersed,' it has simply been displaced within the trial area past more houses and has put more than half a million extra vehicles past schools. On Sion Road past the Gardens significantly more traffic is going past the extremely dangerous blind bends past Sion Hill Place.

The decision document blames this increased traffic on Sion Road on school traffic. This is blatantly false. The baseline data was taken during term time, whilst trial data was taken **both** during term time and out of term time. All the measurements showed a substantial increase in traffic. The increase of up to 880% northbound on Sion Road past the Gardens can only be blamed on the closure of Winifred's Lane.

The proposed mitigations will make not reduce the dangers created on Sion Road as the topography cannot be changed. Indeed, removing parked cars will likely lead to more speeding and more danger to pedestrians. We note the 2nd sentence in the decision document stating that the trial will be permanent **irrespective** of mitigations. **Predetermination?**

Data on the net change in CO2 emissions in the reports is lacking. Given the Council's commitment, quite rightly, to address the Climate Emergency **this is astonishing**.

The council's own numbers show an additional 1,649 km per day being driven around the Winifred's Lane area due to displaced traffic, equating to over **30 additional tons of carbon emitted per year**. So, money intended to address the Climate Emergency has funded a trial that increased CO2 emissions rather than reducing them. **This alone is a reason for the scheme to fail.**

The claim that Active Travel in the Winifred's Lane trial area has increased has **no supporting data**. Only a narrow set of roads were considered and the net change in Active Travel over whole trial area was not evaluated.

You are a scrutiny panel, please scrutinise the data that has been misused in making this irrational decision.

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## R Hushon statement

Good morning panel

I am here in a personal capacity as a respondent and resident of Lansdown, living within the trial area and a participant in community speedwatch sessions on Cavendish Road and Winifred's lane. I request that you decline the call in.

The council have run a rigorous,

fair and extensive consultation process which has made huge efforts to engage with a very wide group of individuals far beyond organised community groups.

The linked experimental scheme was informed by this and designed by officers to improve walking and cycling routes and to reduce through traffic using Cavendish Road northbound.

The trial has achieved this objective by cutting northbound through traffic on Cavendish road by up to 800 cars per day. There is a slight inconvenience to drivers of under a minute. The disinformation propagated relating to impacts on Julian Road has been proven wrong by the data.

I have witnessed a lot more walkers and cyclists in the area using e and cargo bikes especially parents cycling to St Stephens.

There is a key difference in attitudes to the trial within the trial area. Those who walk/cycle or use public transport predominantly tend to support it. Those who don't support it predominantly drive private cars for their principal mode of travel. This must inform any decision making.

The report details the linked scheme as a good scheme which could be improved. I agree with the recommendations.

I would like to address the school run traffic for Kingswood independent prep school. The data suggests school related vehicles are using the route northbound past the prep school exit gate. This gate is a significant distance from the actual school and by 9.10 in the morning and after school pick up this traffic has largely gone. Yet I would still urge the school and parents who are driving this route to develop and implement a better traffic management plan such as a school park and stride scheme or even a term time school street to address an issue which concerns some residents from Sion Hill

Finally the trial is actually supported by a significant group of locals who want positive change in line with council policy. They agree with the recommendations that the scheme is a good scheme and believe it should not be removed, improvements can be made and it should be made permanent.

Thank you for your consideration

I am here today to urge you to rely on the extensive studies and wide consultations performed by the council, to reject the call-in and make the ETRO permanent.

I am a Bath resident, living in lower Lansdown before and during the ETRO at issue today, and my family and I walk and to and from school, work, the gym, the shops. Safety measurably improved with the LTN in place, where my daughter was able to walk to and from school without near misses from drivers rushing on the school run, and we could walk our dog over to the golf course without concerns for our safety. Our experiences are in line with the many benefits outlined in the council's report. We welcome and appreciate the trial and it has made a clear and positive impact on the quality of life and safety in the neighbourhood. And with some tweaks, it can be made even better.

Along with being a local mum and a former state primary school governor, I am also a trained attorney with a master's degree in public policy, with extensive work history in multiple levels of government – city, county, federal, and the UN. As such, I have a great deal of experience with policy making, analysis, and the processes of good governance. I have followed this LTN since its inception with great interest, and from everything I have seen and read it was done in good faith, in accordance with due process, and with full transparency. Candidly, I find it profoundly undemocratic that a small but wealthy group with a clear agenda can fund a separate assessment, that is both opaque and vague, and contains what appears to be flawed methodology, in an attempt to subvert an initiative that has proven empirically successful by the stated measures for an active travel network. Likewise, it is unsurprising that the third-party report paid for by this group reached the conclusions that it did.

You have heard, and will hear, a number of statistics being offered that bear little basis in reality. The data is clear:

- Traffic has dispersed over a wider area.
- The volume of vehicles using the junctions of Cavendish Road & Winifred's Lane has reduced.
- Monitoring has not demonstrated a detrimental impact on air quality overall when compared with baseline data.
- There has been an uplift in active travel in Winifred's Lane.

It is obvious from the commentary that the persistent school run traffic on Sion Hill near Kingswood Prep is the source of both the objections and the problem. It seems that the appropriate resolution is not, in fact, the undoing of a successful active travel network, but improved logistical solutions that can and should be managed primarily by Kingswood, with the support of the council, as well as heightened enforcement actions against poor driver behaviour, which would serve the dual purpose of enhancing public safety and additional revenue collection.

I respectfully request that this panel rejects the call in and seeks to address the stated issues by other means.

Thank you.

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## R. Parker statement

I am speaking on behalf 80 households of the Sion Hill and Summerhill Rd RA, and we strongly object to the closure of Winifred's Lane. The RA represents a broad range of residents including young families, walkers, cyclists and bus users.

I attended an early public presentation about the traffic options and RA committee members attended subsequent meetings. Neither the closure of Winifred's Lane nor the unfounded linkage to the Gay Street ETRO was ever presented for public comment.

The final scope of the ETRO was a complete surprise.

The RA then conducted a door to door survey. We did not encounter anyone who approved of the closure of Winifred's Lane - in fact many were very vocal in their opposition.

Our own figures corroborate the Council's statistic that "72% in the affected area are opposed to closure of Winifred's Lane".

Regarding safety; The blind bends and narrow pavement on the loop below Sion Hill Place are clearly unsuitable for the increased two way traffic, which was previously almost wholly one-way. An increase in the number of accidents in this area is inevitable and already evidenced but omitted from the report.

The kerb in this area has almost completely worn away and the pavement is crumbling so it is now at the same level as the road. Drivers will be unable to distinguish the road boundary, this is a clear hazard for pedestrians.

At the top of Cavendish Road, cars now pass at speed round the corner into and out of Sion Hill West. Prior to the ETRO this was a give-way junction, requiring traffic to be more cautious. Now pedestrians, such as myself, need to be extremely vigilant when trying to cross at the top of Cavendish. And it must be perilous for cyclists attempting to enter Winifred's Lane from Cavendish.

The single member decision states it has been made irrespective of any mitigation. Not only does this show a blatant disregard for safety, the suggested mitigations will not fix these new dangers created at the top of Cavendish Road and Sion Hill Place.

At peak times, the affected section of Sion Rd near the gates of the Kingswood Prep School is now a bedlam of vehicles attempting valid journeys North or South.

My household and three neighbours share the exit with the school and as result of the havoc we are restricted in the times we can make journeys and in arranging deliveries or trades.

I urge the scrutiny committee to suspend their decision until they have observed this created chaos for themselves.

In summary;

- Safety for all road users and pedestrians in this area has been compromised.
- The closure of Winifred's Lane has manifestly failed all three objectives of the LTN.
- No reasonable council would route traffic from one un-classified road, just to be displaced onto another, less suitable, un-classified road, past a school and more residential properties.

There is no rational reason that justifies the closure of Winifred's Lane and it should be unlinked from other ETROs and re-opened.

## **Tim Spratt comments to BANES Scrutiny Committee 23.02.2026**

I ask the Committee to support the call-in. I live in Upper Lansdown Mews. It's within the LN and is affected by the closure of Winifreds Lane. I'm also a member of the Lansdown Crescent Residents Association, which I should stress is formally neutral on the closure of the lane.

I'd like to begin with a quote on WL from one of our ward councillors Mark Elliott who said in January 24: **"If, following the trial, it is indeed the case that the traffic is simply diverted onto other unsuitable routes, then it will not be made permanent, and adjustment or removal will be the only viable options for consideration."**

Our other ward councillor Lucy Hodge said the same, that traffic simply choosing to use Sion Hill West and Sion Hill Place to join back onto Sion Road **quotes "would clearly not be an acceptable outcome."**

Let's be clear. Traffic on Sion Road has **doubled**. That's including **outside** of school hours. On Morford Street traffic went up by 400 vehicles per day, also affecting another junior school.

Those are precisely the outcomes that both our ward councillors said would be unacceptable. I ask you to scrutinise promises that were made to us in the ward. Should they be broken?

More than **half a million additional** vehicles have now been sent past two junior schools, per year through closing WL. **Making closure permanent is a deliberate choice to send much more traffic past schools. Please scrutinise what is safe for school children and their health.**

But what was **omitted from the council decision reports?**

**Collisions.** A four-ton lorry wrote off a resident's car on the blind bends of Sion Road. That was reported, yet it didn't appear anywhere in the reports.

**Speed data.** The number two issue shown in the surveys: Not in the reports.

**Active Travel England's LTN 1/20** compliance review of Winifred's Lane found **four critical safety failures** and stated the design would "likely reduce safety." Not in the reports.

Even the Lansdown Crescent Residents Association has said: **"Winifred's Lane has a gradient of 16% at its lower end and is certainly not safe for children to use as a cycle route."**

**No one's saying do nothing. Ultimately this comes down to the simplest of choices. Simply swap the bollards on WL for speed bumps. Or, support its closure, and choose danger, community division, risking Lucy and Mark likely losing the ward in 27, and ignore the vast majority of residents who are clearly shouting that this specific issue harms them.**

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N.Dickinson statement

GOOD MORNING ....I AM SPEAKING TODAY AS A RESIDENT OF SOMERSET LANE /CLOSE TO WINIFREDS LANE LIVING IN THE HEART OF THE TRIAL AREA.

I AM NOT A TRANSPORT CONSULTANT OR EXPERT NEITHER DO I LIVE ON A NO THROUGH ROAD BUT LIVED DAILY WITH THE VOLUME AND SPEED OF TRAFFIC AND WAS DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT SAFETY ON THE LANES

DATA FROM THE TRIALS COUPLED WITH A THOROUGH AND EXTENSIVE CONSULTATION PROCESS HAVE CLEARLY SHOWN THAT THE ETRO HAS MET THE OBJECTIVES OF A LIVEABLE NEIGHBOURHOOD AND IS SUPPORTED BY THOSE LIVING CLOSEST TO THE AFFECTED ROADS SO I ASK THE PANEL TO REJECT THE CALL - IN AND MAKE THE ETRO PERMANENT.

THE TRIAL CONFIRMS THOUSANDS OF VEHICLES PER DAY WERE USING CAVENDISH ROAD AND OVER 1300 USING WINIFREDS LANE . TO BE CLEAR THIS LANE THIS IS A NARROW LANE SINGLE TRACK NARROW LANEWITH NO FOOTPATH WHERE VEHICLE SPEEDS ARE UNHINDERED ....AS STATED IN THE COUNCIL REPORT “ WINIFREDS LANE IS INAPPROPRIATE FOR TRAFFIC” AND VEHICLE SPEEDS WERE UNHINDERED....IT IS INAPPROPRIATE FOR TRAFFIC. I AM STUNNED BY THE VIEW THAT WINIFREDS LANE SHOULD BE RE OPENED ...AS QUOTED EARLIER IT WAS A LETHAL ROAD.

I JOINED THE LOCAL RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION AND AT THE AGM IN 2020 AROUND 100 MEMBERS VOTED FOR THE AREA TO BE CONSIDERED FOR THE COUNCIL’S LIVEABLE NEIGHBOURHOOD PROGRAMME . PEOPLE WERE FED UP WITH SPEEDING TRAFFIC AND THE AREA BEING USED AS A SHORT CUT SUBSEQUENT AGM’ S AND ASSOCIATION COMMUNICATIONS HAVE CONTINUED TO INFORM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL’S CONSULTATION PROCESS.

IN 2022 I ATTENDED THE AREA CO DESIGN WORKSHOP ORGANISED AS PART OF THE CONSULTATION PROCESS AND EVERY GROUP AGREED THAT THE MAJOR PROBLEM WAS .... TRAFFIC COMING FROM GAY ST, THE CIRCUS AREA AND MARLBOROUGH BUILDINGS USING CAVENDISH ROAD / WINIFREDS LANE AS A RAT RUN FOR THROUGH TRAFFIC....

MUCH OF THE NEGATIVE FEEDBACK REGARDING THE TRIAL ED HAS BEEN EXAGGERATED AND THE COUNCILS OWN REPORT STATES THAT THIS DATA CANNOT BE VERIFIED AND USES METHODS THAT ARE INAPPROPRIATE AND WHICH OVERSTATE THE HARM OF THE SCHEME !!

IT GOES ON ....'IN SOME CASES-OBJECTORS HAVE OVERSTATED THE POTENTIAL HARM OF THE SCHEME '

RESULTS OF THE TRIAL HAVE BEEN VERY POSITIVE FOR LOCAL RESIDENTS WITH SIGNIFICANTLY LESS TRAFFIC , ABLE TO WALK WINIFREDS LANE SAFELY FOR THE FIRST TIME AND SEEING MUCH MORE WALKING / CYCLING / RUNNING

. AND MORE  
ACTIVE TRAVEL IS SEEN IN THE AREA PARTICULARLY ON WINIFREDS LANE TO SUMMARIZE DIRECTLY FROM THE COUNCIL REPORT:

“ THE THREE TRIALS HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN MEETING THE OBJECTIVES OF A LIVEABLE NEIGHBOURHOOD....THE BENEFITS OUTWEIGH THE MANAGEABLE DOWNSIDES .....THERE IS CLEAR EVIDENCE THE LINKED TRIALS HAVE INHIBITED SHORT CUTS WITH MINIMAL INCREASES TO TRAFFIC FLOWS AND TRAVEL TIMES ON ALTERNATIVE ROUTES ..... “!!!

SO WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS??

A RETURN TO THOUSANDS OF CARS PER DAY RAT RUNNING ON CAVENDISH ROAD ....AND 1300+ ON WINIFREDS LANE

OR REJECT THE CALL-IN AND MAKE THE ETRO PERMANENT .....AN ETRO DELIVERING ON ITS OBJECTIVES WITH ONLY MANAGEABLE DOWNSIDES !!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

M Baldwin - STATEMENT TO CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY  
PANEL: 23rd February 2026.

Good morning,

politics can too often be littered with broken promises.

Quotation: "We will continue to work with residents on designing and delivering meaningful improvements, such as [to] rat-running and speeding, through our Liveable Neighbourhood programme." ( B&NES Liberal Democrat Election Manifesto - May 2023 ).

So voters responded with an overwhelming majority for a political ethos in which the concept of the introduction of LNs into our city was entirely implicit and proved to be part of a thorough and ongoing consultation process. [Well endorsable within the context of the Gunning Principles].

Two definitions:

A referendum: is a general vote by the electorate on a single question that has been referred to them for a direct decision.

A consultation: is defined and should be understood as being the act of exchanging information and opinions about a subject, in order to reach a better understanding of it ..... to assist in making a decision about it.

Anyone, including Independent councillors and others, who initiated this call-in and who may have thought this whole process was a referendum, perhaps have not been paying attention.

I do not believe that there are any robust quantifiable issues to substantiate rejection of the Lower Lansdown and Circus Area traffic management interventions. Taken together, they reflect a key element of B&NES's LN policy to keep unnecessary through traffic off minor residential streets and also enhance dramatically our local environments in so many other ways.

In particular, the Gay Street and Catharine Place interventions provide the unique opportunity to link an important heritage and tourist area of our city with the originally implemented liveable neighbourhood of the Royal Crescent, together with the parkland areas which surround both its and our own catchment areas.

Thus we create a benign, much safer and significant green swathe combining and enhancing some of our city's most important heritage features, represented by a seldom recognised very mixed residential demographic.

Members of the panel, as I have said, politics can all too often be littered with broken promises, but today this need not be the case.

Manifesto commitments should not be mere fictional devices. Let's support the immense effort and work undertaken by officers and also those two Cabinet members who have correctly made this LN decision one of permanency.

I urge you to completely reject this call-in and fully support the permanency of the Lower Lansdown and Circus Area Liveable Neighbourhood.

Thank you.

Malcolm Baldwin.

Chair - Circus Area Residents Association (CARA).

## Statement: Lower Lansdown and Circus LN

Good morning, as a resident in the area covered by the Lower Lansdown and Circus liveable neighbourhood trial, I wholeheartedly support the forward-thinking decision to make the three linked through-traffic restrictions permanent.

I always walk around the area and for 5 years or so prior to the ETRO I observed a noticeable increase in traffic volumes and resultant problems such as reckless driving and speeding well over the 20mph limit. In one instance a car was driving **southbound** down Winifreds Lane and the driver attempted to push my husband off the lane.

The ETRO scheme evolved from workshops and exhibitions which I attended, where there was overwhelming support for changes to the status quo in the area. In particular attendees noted the volume and speed of northbound traffic from the bottom of Marlborough to the top of Winifreds Lane. Disappointingly, the absence of objectors at these sessions was noticeable. This meant that they self-excluded from the problem identification and potential solution processes

Since the introduction of the ETRO I have found the area to be much safer. There is now a far more pleasant environment in which to walk and chat with friends and neighbours. When crossing Cavendish to the High Common I no longer fear being hit by racing cars. I have observed far more people walking up and down Cavendish and Winifreds Lane including individuals, dog walkers, school children as well as walking groups on their way to and from the trails on the Upper Lansdown fields.

In my view it is imperative that the three schemes are viewed as a whole, not as discrete entities. Separating them will only serve to create a new round of traffic displacement issues, most likely increasing traffic volumes and associated problems above pre ETRO levels.

There will always be downsides to any LN scheme but in this instance there are proposed mitigations to address legitimate concerns. Many people don't really like change; they don't want to think about doing things differently. However maintaining the pre-ETRO status quo is untenable and dangerous.

I trust the Council will take courage in its convictions and support the decision to make the trial scheme permanent. I therefore respectfully ask the panel to reject the call-in.

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**Council meeting**

February 23 2026

Liveable neighbourhoods: Lower Lansdown ETRO

Comments of Richard Brown

Good morning, and thank you for the opportunity to speak.

By way of background, I am a resident of The Circus and have lived there for just over 11 years. I am a member of the local residents' association and previously served as Vice-Chair on its committee. My comments – in my personal capacity - are targeted at the impact of the Scheme from the through-traffic restrictions into Gay Street and on Catharine Place.

In recent years, I have witnessed a beneficial impact on the local community in The Circus area from a number of Council traffic schemes. Two in particular - the prohibition of tourist coaches and the increase in resident-only parking spaces – have served to reduce traffic volume, traffic noise and pollution in this residential area.

I see the traffic scheme under discussion today as a further essential step in improving the lives of residents in and around Lower Lansdown. The trial scheme has had several clear successes in improving the lives of residents.

I have observed 4 main outcomes:

1. The eradication of rat-run vehicular traffic moving north on upper Gay Street.
2. A material reduction in rat-run vehicular traffic moving south on upper Gay Street.
3. A significant reduction in traffic congestion at the George Street/Gay Street intersection with better traffic flow along George Street.
4. A significant reduction in rat-run traffic through Catharine Place to Bennett Street.

The net result from the lower traffic volumes – as evidenced by Council data – creates a safer environment that has supported increased walking, cycling and e-scooter activity in and around The Circus. In particular, we have seen parents confident enough to teach their children how to cycle and also one gentleman who teaches people how to ride the penny farthing.

From the Scheme benefits that I have observed, I support the decision to make permanent the through-traffic restrictions.

Thank you.

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## Councillor Colin Blackburn statement

### **Good morning chair and fellow councillors**

I speak today on behalf of the hundreds of residents in the Lansdown part of this LN who feel unrepresented and frustrated by the lack of genuine consideration for the consultation and the facts.

Maybe the recent comment by the Leader of this council to 'Back Off' when questioned about consultation results, is indicative of the attitude of this administration that surrounds this decision and why residents feel this trial was pre-determined.

This Call In has been made by a group of cross party councillors, who cannot understand how Cllr Elliott can use the argument of 72% in favour of an LN in one area of a fellow cabinet members ward, justifying him pushing through his decision last year on that LN and now the exact opposite has come out for his own ward.

He is not arguing on his residents behalf for the decision makers to remove Winifred's Lane as part of these linked ETROs. Those residents feel abandoned.

Their safety and voices have been sidelined in favour of a theoretical model that has failed its real-world test. While the Council's stated aim is to support local neighbourhoods and enable active travel, the evidence proves that the Winifred's Lane bollards have achieved the exact opposite for the wider community.

669 residents said safety had decreased during the trial, why are they being ignored?

### **A Failure of Safety and School Protection**

The most damning indictment of this scheme is the impact on our children. By closing Winifred's Lane, the Council has **deliberately displaced traffic** onto residential routes and past junior schools.

- During the trial **Traffic past junior schools increased by an average of 1,401 vehicles daily** during the trial period

- In comparable November periods, this figure rose to **1,522 additional vehicles per day**
- This equates to **300,000 vehicles** being displaced past junior schools, during term time, annually.

This administration has been introducing 'School Streets'. Cllr Lucy Hodge has stated that traffic congestion on roads around schools sometimes leads to dangerous incidents. In supporting school streets, she has stated they are putting children and this safety first, by reducing traffic outside school gates and making journeys safer, calmer and more enjoyable, yet in her own ward the exact opposite has happened.

The Council's own report acknowledges that traffic on **Sion Road**—a primary route for school drop-offs—increased by **up to 115%**, representing up to **1,174 more vehicles a day**. To suggest that "minor mitigations" like parking changes can resolve the safety risks of an extra thousand cars in a congested school zone is not just optimistic; it is dangerous.

**The proposed mitigations themselves do not help the problems the trial has caused.**

The only mitigations suggested amount to increasing visibility by removing parking, on a road that is already residential and has had its traffic doubled.

Nothing about this solves the actual problems within the LTN that have been highlighted by the trial: the location of the schools, where traffic has been redirected, that there is no western boundary main road, and then there's the danger on the bends of Sion Road due to its geometry. This was flagged before the trial.

Prior to the trial, this was never a problem because 89% of traffic was southbound and at half the volume. Mitigations cannot solve the problems now experienced.

Those members sitting on this panel a year ago when the Sydney Place LN was discussed, acknowledged the issues highlighted in that

meeting around cyclist safety and were told that a wider walking and wheeling linked scheme will improve those flaws, yet a year later, nothing has been done.

Why do you think the residents impacted by this scheme don't believe you will ever do mitigations, this administration imposed a flawed LN then and moved on. Residents fear the same will happen here in, Cllr Elliot's own ward.

## **Overwhelming Public Opposition**

The Council claims to value community engagement, yet this scheme is **deeply unpopular**.

- The Council's own consultation found that **84% of respondents** were in objection to the Winifred's Lane trial
- Even within the immediate trial area, **72% of residents opposed the scheme**

When four out of five people tell you a scheme is failing, making it permanent is not "listening"; it is an imposition.

## **A "Medically Flawed" and Discriminatory Policy**

This is not just a traffic issue; it is a **public health crisis**. By displacing traffic from affluent, low-density areas with open parkland, such as Lansdown Crescent, onto high-density residential streets, the Council is concentrating pollutants where they do the most harm.

- **George Street, Julian Road, and Morford Street** are flanked by buildings on both sides that concentrate pollution
- These areas include **St Andrews Church School** (with 222 pupils), high-density flats, and shopping areas.

- Residents argue this is a **medically flawed policy** that knowingly increases health risks for children, the elderly, and those in lower socio-economic circumstances.
- There are significant concerns that the Council has failed to conduct complete **baseline monitoring** for ultra-fine particulates on these affected routes.

Transferring pollution to more vulnerable city areas, violates the Council's fundamental **duty of care** to all its residents.

**All the councillors present here today voted for Vision Zero in November 2023. This LN does not support those aims and should be judged on what we have democratically voted to implement. The extra miles driven by the displaced traffic flies in the face of the outcomes we are meant to be achieving.**

### **Gaps and Flaws in the Data**

The recommendation to make the trial permanent rests on **unsound data**.

- Critical metrics—including **vehicle speeds, kilometres driven, carbon emissions, and implementation costs**, were omitted from the reports.
- Active travel figures for cycling around Winifred's Lane were **miscalculated**, and pedestrian activity in areas like Catharine Place actually **decreased** during the trial.

This scheme does not comply with Department for Transport LTN 1/20, which B&NES have stated, in our own policies, to be a mandatory technical standard. There has been a review by Active Travel England, so why are we ignoring it and pretending it doesn't exist?

- The Council's dismissal of an independent traffic monitoring report, commissioned by residents, claiming it "cannot be validated", appears to be an attempt to protect a pre-determined narrative.

### **Procedural Unfairness and the "Muzzling" of Residents**

Finally, we must address the **erosion of democratic process**. Residents were initially told they could not speak at Cabinet because the decision was "regulatory" or would "prejudice" the outcome under **Rule 3.2.20 of the Constitution**.

Internal emails suggest that public statement slots were retracted because the decision had effectively been **pre-determined** before the Cabinet meeting even occurred. This "muzzling" of the public on a matter of intense community impact is a failure of transparency and governance

## **Conclusion**

The Winifred's Lane trial has failed when measured against the Council's own objectives. It has made our school routes **more dangerous**, our air **more polluted** in high-density areas, and has ignored the **overwhelming opposition** of the local community.

**The linking of the trials is arbitrary and has no stated legal basis.**

The council states the linking is to prevent vehicles short-cutting to the A46 and M4. Catharine Place cannot help you if that is where you want to go - it is not on the same journey. The principal underpinning linked cells, is that by removing one would inundate another. That inundation has happened on Sion Road regardless, proving the link does not function. With it being arbitrary, the use of area-wide data is also arbitrary: what happens on Catharine Place has nothing to do with Winifred's Lane. In isolation, the Winifred's Lane trial has unequivocally failed. The decision to treat the three ETROs as a single linked scheme has no stated legal basis in the reports.

We urge you send this decision back to the Cabinet members for review and encourage them to **separate and revert the Winifred's Lane ETRO**. Do not prioritise the "hope" of a theoretical transport model over the **lived reality and safety** of the residents who know their area best.

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## **Councillor Colin Blackburn – summary**

### **What are we meant to be achieving with LN's?**

How many of you have been and seen the Winfred's Lane closure in action? Have you seen the gradient on the lane and tried to cycle it? Have you walked around the impacted roads that have taken the brunt of the displaced traffic and seen the geography that we have forced people to navigate?

Why do we think using CRSTS funding, meant to reduce carbon emissions, is appropriate for this section? It clearly fails to meet the objectives.

This Call In is specifically about uncoupling a linked part of a wider LTN plan that serves to cause more harm when looked at as a single case. 2 parts seem to be working fine, you have heard from residents in support of those.

I spoke to a resident on Saturday who lives in the central area by the Circus. He is a surgeon treating NHS patients but works out of our Authority area, south of B&NES. He told me, he now has an additional 10 minutes on his commute each day. I explained that was an acceptable consequence of the Gay St, Catherine Place interventions. He was having to use main roads and whilst his journey is unavoidable because there are no alternative transport options for him, this is a better outcome for the city. But that logic does not apply to the Lower Lansdown trial, it is pushing vehicles onto residential roads, not main roads.

Opinion on this isn't split on political lines, but on geographic lines. The near entirety of households who live north and west of the bollards oppose them. The speakers today in support, live beneath the bollards, and are also the people who inflicted this on their near neighbours when it was never even mentioned as an option in the first phase of consultation workshops. That should tell you something about why this is so controversial.

The Lower Lansdown resident's safety and voices have been sidelined in favour of a theoretical model that has failed its real-world test. While

the Council's stated aim is to support local neighbourhoods and enable active travel, the evidence proves that the Winifred's Lane bollards have achieved the exact opposite for the wider community.

*Cllr Manda Rigby, February 2024, on the Southlands ETRO: "I am genuinely, genuinely saddened that the community has felt split in this way. That absolutely was not the intention"*

- A subsequent opportunity to prevent community split is presented to Councillor Rigby here, please do the right thing and refer this decision back to the Cabinet members to find a solution to these unacceptable but avoidable consequences.

As ward councillors and speakers have highlighted, there are views both in favour and against. That is precisely why a review is necessary, to provide clarity and evidence-based data rather than relying on "**who shouts the loudest**".

We have heard personal experiences however it is the committee's and ward councillors' responsibility to represent ALL residents not just those here today and quite simply 72% within the immediate trial area oppose the Winifred Lane LTN.

## **Conclusion**

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I urge you send this decision back to the Cabinet members for review and encourage them to **separate and revert the Winifred's Lane ETRO**. Do not prioritise the "hope" of a theoretical transport model over the **lived reality and safety** of the residents who know their area best.

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