

**Communities, Transport and Environment Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel 18  
September 2017 – Air pollution – note by Patrick Rotheram, Federation of Bath  
Residents' Associations**

I'm speaking for the Federation of Bath Residents Associations, which represents 5000 residents across the city. Air pollution and traffic congestion have consistently been our top concerns. NO<sub>2</sub> pollution is above the legal limit throughout the road network in Bath, and it hasn't got any better over the past 10 or more years. These levels of air pollution are known to have serious health effects, but successive Councils have allowed this situation to continue.

This deplorable history of inaction must now end, because the Government has listed B&NES among the most polluted authorities in the country, and B&NES will now be required to develop *and implement* a plan to reduce pollution below the legal limit *in the shortest possible time*. We will do all we can to hold you to that.

92% of pollution in Bath is caused by traffic. Action must therefore be focused on reducing traffic volumes, particularly the most polluting diesel vehicles.

The new consultation paper is a step forward from the current AQAP, as it does now address traffic reduction measures. However, none of this will make any difference unless B&NES Council actually implements these measures, so it's good that the Government will be making sure that you do.

No amount of encouragement and exhortation will persuade people not to drive into and through central Bath, if it suits them to do so, and if they can. They should be actively discouraged by making driving in less attractive; or impossible, in the case of through traffic.

B&NES must make reducing vehicle access to the city centre a key part of the new AQAP. Public off-street parking should be reduced, as in the Bath Transport Strategy. On-street parking in the Central Zone should be mainly for residents and other essential users. Traffic management should be used to remove traffic congestion and pollution from city streets – also part of the Transport Strategy - including Georgian gems such as Queen Square and The Circus.

There should be a Clean Air Zone covering the whole of central Bath, and it should include diesel cars, which are the major pollution source in the centre.

An alternative route for the A36-A46 through traffic must be found, to enable the highly polluting HGV traffic through the city to be restricted. This is a serious problem in its own

right but it also impacts on traffic throughout Bath. It need not be the 'link road' across the valley; the Department for Transport proposed an alternative route from Bathford to Beckington, crossing the river east of Bradford on Avon. We hope that all parties can agree on the urgent need for a feasibility study to analyse the problem and propose cost-effective solutions.