

B&NES Cabinet 7 February 2018 – Parking Strategy

Notes by Patrick Rotheram, Federation of Bath Residents' Associations (FoBRA)

Parking creates traffic. This isn't rocket science. Cars aren't beamed down to parking spaces, they are driven there. That is traffic. The more parking in the city, the more traffic, and the more pollution. Short-term parking generates more journeys. So reducing parking is a direct way of reducing air pollution. The parking strategy recognises that parking control can help reduce traffic and pollution, and we welcome that.

B&NES has been mandated to bring air pollution below the legal limit as soon as possible. Traffic volumes must be reduced to achieve this. We support increased long-term car park charges to encourage commuters to use the Park and Ride. However, reducing car park charges for B&NES residents will encourage more local traffic and could well cancel out any reduced commuter use.

We welcome the Hierarchy of Kerb Space, which places residents above short-stay and long-stay parking. It should be applied as soon as possible in the central zone, where residents have almost no priority despite this being the most densely residential part of the city. Reducing meter parking would dramatically reduce the traffic caused by people driving round and round looking for a space. Instead they would go straight to an off-street car park or use the park-and-ride. Air pollution, which harms the health of thousands of residents, would be reduced. Put Residents First!

Reducing traffic and pollution will add to the vitality and viability of Bath, not detract from it. These are not in conflict, as the many historic cities that have removed traffic from their centres have shown, to the benefit of residents, businesses and visitors.

FOBRA supports parking control on Sundays. Sunday is a major shopping day and is now as busy as any other, certainly Saturday. Cars create just as much congestion and pollution on Sundays. Sunday is a difficult day for city centre residents find parking (which *they* do pay for). You are also foregoing the chance to raise parking meter revenue by one-sixth. But none of that is mentioned in this paper. You have heard from people who like to park for free, but there is no logic in treating Sundays differently. We hope you will reconsider this when you consider how to meet your air pollution target.

The one good thing in the coach strategy was the choice of Odd Down as the long-term coach park. The coach strategy as a whole was totally flawed, as it proposed to allow coaches to drop off in the heart of the city, taking no account of the wider aims of reducing traffic and air pollution set out in Council policies [the Core Strategy, Placemaking Plan, Public Realm and Movement Strategy, Transport Strategy and Air Quality Action Plan]. Coach operators and visitors were consulted, but not residents. You should follow the example of York, which allows no coaches in its historic core (except disabled, by arrangement). We hope that you will revisit the strategy to provide for drop-off on the edge of the centre in places such as Lower Bristol Road and Pulteney Road, from where it is just a short walk in to the heart of the city.