

## **Cabinet 23 June 2021 - Patrick Rotheram speaking notes on Liveable Neighbourhoods**

I'm speaking for Vineyards Residents' Association. We're close to the city centre, but in Walcot Ward. The Paragon opposite is Grade 1 Listed while Vineyards is Grade 2. Paragon is mainly multi-occupancy houses, many social housing, and has some of the highest residential density in Bath. 1,000 people live along this stretch of road, which is already heavily congested and polluted.

We've been very worried about a Camden Low Traffic Neighbourhood.

Stopping a large number of vehicles using Camden would displace traffic onto London Road and thence to Paragon and the central area. The Clean Air Plan is already right on the margin and increased traffic on this route would probably push it over the edge. More traffic congestion and longer journeys would increase emissions.

So we're relieved that you are being recommended to approve a 'small scale scheme' for Kensington Gardens and Snow Hill. However, even a smaller scheme is likely to displace traffic and will need to be assessed very carefully.

It seems to be an article of faith for the Council that LTNs will reduce traffic. Certainly, they should reduce traffic in the favoured areas. But why should this 'force down overall traffic levels' without a plan to discourage traffic from entering or passing through Bath, or to improve bus services for drivers to transfer to? In reality, most drivers won't give up their cars. Traffic will be displaced from LTNs onto the 'main roads', which mainly consist of densely residential streets which already suffer from high levels of traffic congestion and air pollution.

Bath needs a transport plan, including traffic management and parking control, to reduce the overall volume of traffic coming into and through the city.

Introducing LTNs in Bath without one is like squeezing a balloon – reduce

traffic in one area, and it will come out somewhere else. Increased congestion may deter some drivers, but that hardly counts as a plan.

We have asked for traffic calming measures such as a 20 mph limit and permanent resident parking on Paragon, enforcing the HGV weight limit, and a pedestrian crossing at the unsafe junction of Paragon and Lansdown. But mainly, through traffic needs to be reduced with a city centre LTN. This isn't a wild idea. Your top level policies, the Local Plan and the Bath Transport Strategy, call for reduced traffic in the historic centre. What is crazy is allowing a main road through the heart of the WHS, dividing the centre and spoiling one of Bath's most iconic spaces, Queen Square. It should be undesignated as a through route. It's a challenge, but I urge you to rise to it. Our great city deserves no less.