

Harry Tedstone Statement

I am going to quickly walk through the main issues

Impact on businesses

- Timing and cost – bad for bath business and for individual businesses a death nell – The Itv new piece filmed today will evidence this very clearly.
- Unfair Competition – why are you giving Air bnb an unfair competitive edge

Impact on emissions and pollution

- Success in reducing car use – you are increasing unnecessary local city centre journey by a predicated 30 000

Practical challenges with the proposed scheme

- Need for more finessed solution – a blanked policy just does not work
- Problems with alternative provision – The use of the park and rides.

“Parking is a key issueThis policy needs to be strengthened and extended to create more long stay capacity at the periphery, **in tandem** with further constraints on parking in the central area.

The Strategy is intended to **generate significant changes in travel behaviour and mode share. It also needs to be deliverable. Generating major benefits for the economy, community and environment is achievable in the spirit of the vision and offers the potential to make Bath an exemplar city for sustainable transport.”**

This is a quote from the report commissioned by BANES called “ Getting Around Bath- A Transport Strategy for Bath 2014.

We strongly support this approach to the issues we now face some 7 years on.

In 2019 I spoke on behalf of BIGHA at a Liberal Democratic Public Meeting in Queens Square about how we deal with the issue and suggested the slogan “Don’t Drive Be Alive” for Bath. I hoped that this would/could potentially be adopted by the Council so that everyone in Bath could get behind it from school children, to residents, to business and hospitality we all need to play our part.

We, the hospitality sector, have made it very clear that we wanted to work with the Council, were committed to the green agenda, we are not afraid of change, but that there needs to be “**deliverable - generating major benefits for the economy, community and environment**” alike.

The current proposals leave a lot of unanswered but not insurmountable questions. The talks yesterday with the Councillor for Transport and the Councillor for Economic Delivery showed that a solution, or group of solutions was out there but the current proposal was not it.

We have provided empirical detailed evidence that the proposals as they stand

- a) Will increase unnecessary short journey's into the city Centre especially from zone 1 by 10s of thousands each year – adding to the emissions. The guest will drop off their bags, be directed how to get to Charlotte Street and then either walk, get a taxi, or be brought back by the guesthouse in another vehicle. This process will be repeated in reverse on check out.

For each permit used working on an average 2 night stay used 365 days a year and assuming i) 75% occupancy represents and b) 75% of people drive to Bath - an additional 205 unnecessary car journeys to park in the centre of Bath. With the 32 central and 113 zone 1 hotel permits - 145 in total an additional 29,688 journeys adding to emissions and adding to congestion.

This was surely not the intended consequence of the proposal.

- b) With no strategy to encourage change behaviour or to manage the expectations of the visitor to Bath the plan as it stand will damage the major industry of Bath, with many future visitors staying outside of the area and 2 day tripping. This should have been part of the Economic Impact Assessment
- c) The current plans give the 400+ Airbnb properties who, can use their resident visitor permits to park guests on the street at little or not extra cost, an unfair competitive edge over businesses that have traded in some case for over 300 years

- d) That a blanket policy is not a solution and , as with LTNs, individual solutions for each neighbourhood can be found that together will be able or needed? to deliver the desired outcome for Bath as a whole.
- e) That parking in Charlotte Street is not guaranteed. For example, for a guest arriving in Bath last Saturday between 11.30am and 6pm there were no spaces left in Charlotte Street. When Avon Street is demolished and the Hilton Garden Hotel open on St James Street, the night time economy comes back and we are able to trade at full capacity the situation is a lot worse. The question is then where should we tell them to park and how do we assist them so that the overall welcoming visitor experience of Bath is not fundamentally flawed as a whole and the hard won reputation of the individual family run establishments forced to use the system fatally damaged overnight in the process.
- f) It was only yesterday that we and the councillors in the meeting found out that the Park and Rides were open 24/7 contrary to the Council's own website and the Travel West Website. This is a potential game changer and at least two establishments expressed interest in piloting their use for both guests and staff to park.
- g) The timing of the proposed changes, when the industry is struggling to get back in its feet, with many in greater debt than they have been before and with huge staff shortages is unconscionable. An increase in costs is expected and accepted. But its implementation in one go rather than in increments, will be a step too far for many to survive.

We know the Council do not want to destroy any business. We understand from our recent conversations that this was never your intention – but it is nevertheless a likely consequence of these proposals as they stand. I would like to take this moment on behalf of BIHA members to confirm our commitment to work with the Council to find workable, sustainable, pragmatic solutions. We need to listen to each other a lot better.

Our ask, is that with a potential solution, or group of solutions - to benefit all - within reach, that a final decision on this matter must be deferred. This does not mean that it will be kicked into the long grass. We would still like to see a resolution of this matter as quickly as possible - a matter of months not years -

even if that we to mean the implementation date has to be move to ensure its success.

In sum,

This proposal would manifestly increase the emissions and congestion

Whilst we can show how devastating it would be for business and the economy of Bath – this needs to be properly looked into and an urgent economic impact assessment needs to be undertaken

There is no Destination Management Plan or strategy to help with the behaviour change needed when it come to sell Bath as Green City. Without it none of the changes will be viable, or sustainable.

The ability of the independent businesses to trade successfully or at all in the constituency of the cllr for Transport has been brought into sharp focus and a piece to ITV recoded today will evidence this and we would ask you to watch it.

My final ask is lets deliver on Recommendation 5 of our new Chief Executive One Shared Mission an

“Build on the Ground-up Framework for Action set out in this report (Fair, Green, Creative, connected plus People, Place and Systems) by developing shared intelligence, data and place-based KPIs, which highlight understanding of inequalities alongside existing strengths and new investment opportunities. “

With a little more time, sharing of data and listening/ open dialogue it is so very possible.

Wouldn't it be great if we could do this? To put words into action. I think so and hope you do to.

Thank you.