

Adam Reynolds - Climate Emergency Transport Board

The council has declared a climate and nature emergency and has committed to a 25% reduction in road miles driven by 2030. To put this into context, 60% of car journeys in BaNES are under 5 miles, but only account for 20% of road miles driven. This is an extremely hard nut to crack.

The Government, through the Active Travel Fund, is providing the council yearly with £1m in funding for school streets, cycle lanes, and low traffic neighbourhoods (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gear-change-one-year-on-review>).

The Government has also provided the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) with a £540m Sustainable Transport Settlement (<https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/West-of-England-Combined-Authority-CRS-TS.pdf>). This will deliver protected cycle lanes along the A4, A367, and A37. The settlement also provides £60m for further cycle infrastructure and £100m for Liveable Neighbourhoods across the region.

With £20m Levelling Up Fund being provided to each constituency (£40m in total for BaNES), and BaNES being a level 2 council, the bids that Wera Hobhouse and Jacob Rees-Mogg need to champion, will score highly ONLY for transport schemes. I have already approached Jacob, my MP, and proposed a North East Somerset Greenways Network.

The “new” council administration has bid £890k for a politically easy resurfacing of the *existing* traffic free Rainbow Woods walking/wheeling and cycling route with no effort made to connect it to Ralph Allen School or the Combe Down/Fox Hill communities.

This “new” administration has also stopped the delivery of a trial strategic North Road route against the rules of the Active Travel Fund which is likely to result in the Department For Transport reducing general funding for the council.

The previous Lib Dem administration under Cllr Dine Romero, had a much better strategic transport vision.

Sadly the opposition Conservative group is demanding that Liveable Neighbourhoods be abandoned, that a probable legally required shift to CAZ “D” which includes older cars, not be made, and has completely failed to tackle this administration’s “BaNES means Bath and No one EISE” approach to transport while directly going against their own governments national policies.

The council has just advertised for a Head Of Transport Strategy while WECA’s *final* Local Walking Cycling Infrastructure plan (<https://travelwest.info/projects/west-of-england-local-cycling-and-walking-infrastructure-plan>) is still missing the regional strategic cycle network map required by the consultation report and a vital planning tool for every council and developer in the region.

Given the £200+ million to be spent on sustainable transport in BaNES in the coming five years, it appears that neither councillors or officers have any clear strategic plan for this region.

The result is that tribal politics directly impact the ability of this administration to act strategically and develop and deliver a nine year plan to reduce road miles driven by 25%.

Solving this is simple. I am asking the council to set up a crossparty Climate Emergency Transport Board where any councillor can attend, supported by council executives and invited experts. The role of this board will be to develop and deliver the necessary 25% reduction in road miles driven by 2030.

We do not have time for blah blah blah politics. We need decisive bold cross party action year on year and the current tribal nature of our politics and the election cycle simply fail Bath AND North East Somerset. Please urgently fix this.