

**STATEMENT TO BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET FULL COUNCIL**  
**14<sup>th</sup> JULY 2011**

**[NB: The appendices are available on the Council Minute book]**

I find the proposed diversion of the A362 in Radstock somewhat puzzling.

According to the Authority's own figures, Radstock is now in the 40% least deprived areas in England. Additionally, since 2006, unemployment among 18 – 24 year olds mirrors England generally, but when comparing Benefits overall, has been better than the rest of England (see details in Appendix 1)

Meanwhile a successful application was made to the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) for £800,000 to build the new road. This was based upon the claim by this Authority that it was required for Regeneration (Appendices 2 and 3).

If Radstock is in the upper 40% of areas, why is this type of blanket regeneration required? It would seem that two departments of the Authority have not been working together and perhaps encouraged the unnecessary expenditure of £800,000 of public money by the HCA, as well as £400,000 from B&NES own coffers, all tax-payers and Council Tax payers money.

The question of how a road which cuts through a shopping area actually helps regeneration must be answered. Certainly local inhabitants will not be helped by its presence. Alternatives do not appear to have been looked at to improve traffic flow. A letter was sent to the HCA which was forwarded to this Authority, outlining possible options: was it looked at? (Appendix 4).

As at April 15<sup>th</sup>, the traffic survey report would not be completed for "some months": after that of course, a road could be designed but certainly not built by October this year.

It is difficult not to arrive at the conclusion that the road was wanted and reasons then found for its development.

Thank you.

George Bailey