

Vision Zero

Whilst I greatly welcome the Councils press release to support road safety, it has to become a reality not just a statement.

I've cycled in Bath since 1982 and now more than ever feel frightened for my safety and the safety of other vulnerable road users.

To highlight my anxieties I am going to describe to you my most frequent cycle journey and propose what actions need to be taken to eliminate some risk.

Proposal 1 A school street for all school roads in Bath.

I cycle down Charmouth Road to join the A4. I am frequently met on Charmouth Rd by speeding drivers, on the wrong side of the road racing to the school for drop off/pick up. There is limited signage, no speed control or pedestrian refuge to encourage safe behaviours.

Proposal 2 Cameras to monitor / fine those vehicles driving dangerously.

I then cycle along the Upper Bristol Road to the Weston Hotel. Every day at least one driver shoots the red lights, usually more.

Proposal 3 When necessary works are carried out there must be provision in place for cyclists and pedestrians

The next part of the fairly hair raising journey takes me to the Windsor Bridge Junction. Once again I take my life in my hands as drivers race out of Tescos at speed and enter the site at a greater speed. Access to the river path has been halted twice for extended periods of time in the past few years.

Proposal 4 Appropriate signage to educate drivers about the Highway code.

Cycling from Windsor Bridge to Victoria Park is busy, however a pedestrian refuge does mean drivers have to slow down.

The designated cycle path is a positive addition until I get to the parking bays and frequently a passenger door is opened blocking any oncoming cyclist.

Proposal 5 Cycle lanes that start and finish safely.

The next part of the journey is probably the least well thought through. I have to join the traffic flow just before drivers turn a corner onto Charlotte Street. This is where I encounter the most threatening of behaviours.

From Queens Square it is almost impossible to negotiate cycle paths/roads without obstruction.

The most dangerous obstacle needs highlighting on my return journey. The cycle path comes to an abrupt stop before the refuse depot and cyclists are expected to continue their journey through a very busy 2 lane junction.

When I came to Bath in 1982 cycling/walking was a pleasurable experience. Whilst I accept that the volume of traffic has increased significantly what I don't accept is how incapable we are as a nation to promote Vision Zero – safe streets for everyone.

I cycled/walked with a young family and seldom felt intimidated. Today I am very reluctant to do the same with my grandchildren for fear of them being hurt.

I have fewer and fewer friends who will cycle with me for fear of being involved in an accident, however they will happily drive a car.

The vulnerabilities of pedestrians, cyclists and those with disabilities has to be taken seriously.