

Queen Charlton Lane Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO): Summary of outcomes

This summary reviews the headlines from the consultation and traffic monitoring survey reports that have been prepared to inform a decision on the Queen Charlton Lane through-traffic restriction, installed in November 2022.

The aim of the trial was to assess the impact of a through-traffic restriction to prevent motorists from using the road as an inappropriate shortcut, and to create a safer environment for those choosing to walk, cycle or ride along this narrow lane.

We prepared three reports (attached as appendices to the single member decision report):

- Appendix A - A traffic monitoring report relating to baseline and post-installation data.
- Appendix B - A report on the ETRO public consultation relating to the six-month period between November 2022 and May 2023.
- Appendix C - A report on the outcomes of the detailed end-point survey in Sept/October 2023 (specifically for residents living near the trial).

An air quality monitoring report was not produced for this trial due to the already existing low background levels of nitrogen dioxide in this location.

You can read these reports at www.bathnes.gov.uk/QueenCharltonLaneETRO

ETRO six-month consultation between November 2022 and May 2023:

There were 98 responses received during the six-months public consultation. In summary, the level of support from those that chose to respond to the survey was:

- 76 respondents (78%) supported the ETRO
- 4 respondents partially supported the ETRO and
- 18 respondents (18%) opposed to the ETRO.

Residents' detailed end-point survey September/October 2023:

There were 115 responses to the residents' end-point survey (which was conducted after the trial had been in place for at least six months). The level of support from those that chose to respond was:

- 84 respondents (73%) supported the trial scheme.
- 24 respondents (21%) opposed the trial scheme.
- 6 respondents were undecided; and

- 1 respondent did not give their opinion.

Almost three-quarters of respondents agreed that the trial scheme has positively impacted them and their household (74%), with 67% strongly agreeing. Under one-fifth of respondents disagreed with this statement (16%), where 13% strongly disagreed.

All respondents were given an opportunity to comment on why they supported or opposed the scheme. The reasons cited for supporting or opposing to the six-month trial scheme were similar in both the ETRO public consultation and the residents end-point survey conducted in September/October 2023.

Reasons for supporting the trial

- The area and the road felt safer, especially for children and the elderly
- There was less traffic around; and
- It was more pleasant for walking and cycling and there had been improvements in safety for cyclists and pedestrians.

Reasons for not supporting the trial

- Respondents felt the restriction was unfair to motorcyclists
- It was perceived to displace traffic and cause congestion elsewhere; and
- It was an unnecessary scheme and felt to be a waste of money.

How do views compare with the traffic monitoring data?

About the monitoring

- Baseline traffic data was collected for seven consecutive days from 3 October to 9 October 2022 to gain average daily counts before the trial started in Nov 2022.
- Post-installation traffic data was collected for seven consecutive days from 18 to 24 April 2023 and again from 3 to 9 October 2023
- By comparing post-installation average daily counts with baseline data, we can assess the impact of the trial. We did not collect data during school or university holidays or other times that impact significantly on average traffic flows.
- Please note that for the purpose of this summary we are comparing baseline data with October 2023 data plus daily averages collected over a full week (7 days), unless stated otherwise. You can read the full report for further details.

Reduction of traffic on Queen Charlton Lane

- On average, around 470-500 fewer vehicle movements each day were recorded on Queen Charlton Lane after the trial was installed. This is a reduction of around 85%.

- There has also been an uplift of almost 300% in walking activity and an increase of 60-80% in cycling activity.

Increase in traffic on surrounding roads

A concern raised in responses to both surveys was the effect the scheme would have on surrounding roads. There were six comments provided about this in the ETRO public consultation held between November 2022 and May 2023 and 18 responses in the detailed residents' end-point survey in September/October 2023.

The traffic monitoring data provides evidence of changes in traffic volumes on Queen Charlton Lane and surrounding roads.

In terms of the principal alternative routes, traffic increases were observed when comparing baseline and post-installation data (collected in October 2022 and October 2023).

- On Woollard Lane, northbound traffic increased on average by 250 to 275 vehicle movements each day (11-12%). Southbound traffic increased, on average, by 370 to 425 vehicles each day (10-12%).
- On the southwest section of Charlton Road, northbound traffic increased, on average, by 575 to 580 vehicles each day (13-15%). Southbound traffic increased by around 640 vehicles each day (16%).

Active travel on Queen Charlton Lane:

Data comparing 7-day average baseline data (October 2022) with post-installation data (October 2023) we note significant increases in walking and cycling trips using Queen Charlton Lane.

- An average of 50 more pedestrians walked in both directions each day in October 2023. This represents an increase of just under 300% compared with baseline data.
- In both directions (and in the same period), an average of between 12-18 more cyclists each day were recorded, which is uplift of 60-80%.

Conclusions

The purpose of the trial was to cut speeding through traffic and provide a safe route for walking and cycling.

Achieving objectives

The data shows that the trial has significantly reduced through traffic on Queen Charlton Lane and provided a safe and pleasant route for walking and cycling. In turn, this has encouraged an uplift in active travel along the lane. These results have been sustained across two sets of surveys and in both directions.

Support for the scheme

Additionally, the surveys suggest that most people who chose to respond to the consultation survey and the detailed end-point survey, support the measure (78%

and 73% respectively). Almost three-quarters of residents responding agreed that the trial scheme has positively impacted them and their household (74%), with 67% strongly agreeing.

Traffic impacts

While the data shows that traffic on the principal alternative routes to Queen Charlton Lane has increased (i.e., on Woollard Lane and the southwestern section of Charlton Road), this is to be expected as the purpose of the trial was to encourage commuter traffic to stay on the main roads.

While the increase is not insignificant, it is felt that a considerable proportion of that change may be reflecting a general increase in traffic on routes that would otherwise be unaffected by the trial.

An example is the north-western section of Charlton Road, which also saw more traffic during the monitoring period but given its location, would not have been directly impacted by the trial.

We also note more traffic on Sleep Lane (when comparing baseline and post-installation data). Sleep Lane is not an alternative route for Queen Charlton Lane, nor a main road, however northbound traffic here has increased by up to 16% compared with baseline data (averaging up to 280 extra vehicles a day).

It is therefore difficult to draw a definitive conclusion on the impact of the trial itself on traffic volumes on the main alternative routes (e.g., Woollard Lane and southwest Charlton Road) because we also note increased traffic volumes on routes which should not have been directly impacted by the trial. In other words, the trial may not be the sole contributor to increased traffic on alternative routes.

On balance, it appears that the volume of displaced traffic is relatively modest, considering the length and the directness of the route that was closed to through-traffic, and the changes in traffic elsewhere.

Further information

To obtain a link to the single member decision report (SMD), and the full reports attached as appendices to the SMD, please go to:

<https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/queen-charlton-through-traffic-restriction-trial-etro-consultation> or via www.bathnes.gov.uk/QueenCharltonLaneETRO