

**B&NES**  
**Cabinet Meeting**  
**11 July 2024**  
**6.30pm**  
**Guildhall, Bath**

I am speaking as a local resident on New Sydney Place to express my support of your – this Council’s – Liveable Neighbourhood programme in general, and the through traffic restriction trial on Sydney Road in particular.

We are now half way through the trial period.

We have seen some immediate opposition to the closure of Sydney Road on social media and in the press, only days into the trial. But we have also seen a lot of positive feedback. This includes responses from neighbours in adjacent areas, who had been rather sceptical before, from people travelling through the area, visitors to Sydney Gardens and the Canal as well as children who tell us they are now walking to school since “the bollards have been put up”.

Let me just reiterate a few points that seem easily forgotten in this debate.

Sydney Road was a classic example of a residential road being used as a “short-cut” for a trunk road. This resulted in excessive speeding and huge traffic volume – all well documented by Community SpeedWatch sessions and the police. These issues were the greatest concerns expressed by residents in the Public Engagement Report of January 2022.

As reflected in B&NES’ baseline monitoring before the trial, our own traffic counts, too, consistently showed that this residential road was used as a main artery into and out of Bath.

Having said all that in relation to this particular trial, **the central goal of the LN programme is a reduction of motorised traffic in Bath**. Therefore, we must look at the long-term rewards of the scheme: the Sydney Road LN is only the start; it takes time to change travel behaviour and car ownership levels. (I am speaking here to you as someone who does live with the voluntary “inconvenience” of not owning a car myself.)

**The Sydney Road LN is pivotal for B&NES’ overall LN strategy, which is to encourage people to walk, wheel or cycle short journeys if possible.**

Reducing the dominance of vehicles will reduce road traffic congestion for people who rely on their cars – whether because they live or work in rural areas, or because they are elderly or disabled.

This LN cannot be assessed in isolation but is part of a bigger picture: the promotion of safe, active and more sustainable transport for the whole of Bath, in the light of climate emergency. We need LNs as active-travel corridors. **They are transformational schemes that make it safer for everyone to move around actively. Streets belong to all of us, not just motorists.**

This programme – your programme – has had huge support in the multiple stages of public consultation open to everyone. It was prominent on the LibDem manifesto in the last local elections – again with overwhelming support. And the recent general elections again endorsed those standing up for Liveable Neighbourhoods in Bath.

Please be assured of that public support and continue the policy you started. Thank you!