

Good evening, my name is Dr Ian Orpen. I have lived in Bathampton since 1992 and was a GP in Bath for 30 years.

For 10 years till 2020 I worked closely with the council in a senior NHS role, including with Cllr Guy. Indeed, I recognise many familiar faces in the chamber today.

I was struck by the motivation of councillors, irrespective of their political persuasion: to represent their ward and the people who live in it and, to serve the public.

I saw how important it is to engage meaningfully with the public to change how they lead their lives. This required listening to all those who needed to be heard.

The Sydney Road LTN has been an object lesson in how **not** to make change to the way lives are led.

I speak for many who feel dismayed by the way in which this proposal has been handled and by our ward councillors in not facilitating their involvement in the process. It has further eroded trust in politicians.

To be clear, I have no objection to Liveable Neighbourhoods as I have seen where they are thought through, they bring real benefit. Also, I see the administration's ambitions in tackling the climate emergency as laudable.

However, the Sydney Road scheme, that even Cllr Guy admitted that he had initial misgivings about, is a case where noble ambition defies practical reality.

To improve residential streets, and encourage safe, sustainable travel relies on the correct intervention. If you choose the wrong place for your intervention, you cause harm and, at times, outright danger instead.

To suggest that Sydney Road (which, prior to the trial, carried 1/3 of the traffic from the A36 into Bath) is a "rat run", does not stand up to scrutiny. It was designated a trunk road until declassified at the request of the council.

This technicality does not alter how the road is seen and used by the public.

The disbenefits of the scheme should have been obvious without a trial, such as displaced traffic onto neighbouring roads, thereby generating rat runs, congestion and increased pollution.

Delivering change always generates opposition. It is deeply unfortunate that the council chose to ignore the views of many whose lives would be directly affected by the proposal.

Instead, it performed the minimum statutory consultation. This has provoked unnecessary opposition in the drive to tackle the climate emergency: enemies, not allies.

The trial has coincided with extensive roadworks along the A36 that the council officers knew about, which has reduced traffic by 20%. This will impact trial data and its validity. It gives the impression that the council do not take the trial seriously and further undermines faith in our political leaders, and the process.

However, there is time for the council to show it is listening, to halt the trial and consult more widely to design a more suitable alternative.