

Council Statement

My name is Bethany Claus Widick, I am a resident of lower Lansdown. I'm here to offer my perspective on the ETRO taking place in my neighbourhood. First, I'd like to tell you how it was, prior to the liveable neighbourhood initiative:

Every morning and afternoon during school run time, we would see parents using Cavendish, Winifred's Lane, Sion Hill, and Lansdown Crescent as cut-throughs on their way to and from Kingswood and the Royal High. There were giant SUVs bombing through the neighbourhood, often with one child, at excessive speeds. They would ignore pedestrians, and we and our daughter were almost hit multiple times, while walking to and from school. We didn't walk our dog during school run times, because we were concerned for her safety, due to some near misses.

We had seen the opposition on class WhatsApp groups, primarily coming from people who don't live in lower Lansdown who simply want it as a convenient way to drive their children to school and shave two minutes off of their route. Their poor planning and "me first" attitude shouldn't require us to accept a dangerous situation. And for parents who lived closer to one school campus, they refused to consider the minibus services that both Kingswood and the Royal High offer to transport children between prep and senior school campuses. They simply preferred to drive.

Now, with the ETRO in place, this is our current situation:

The neighbourhood is quieter, traffic is calmed, and we have seen more people walking and biking, both residents and tourists who frequently visit the Crescent. There is a tangible difference in feeling safer as a pedestrian, walking the dog, walking to and from work down in the city and my daughter walking to and from school.

While we don't have a car, we do take taxis and Ubers as well as the bus, so we have firsthand experience in the impact of the detour on drivers. Moreover, we can actually put a numerical figure on it, which is less than a pound. 1 additional minute, and less than a pound, for a taxi coming up from Kingsmead to pop over to Lansdown Road as opposed to the shorter route of Cavendish. That is absolutely worth it to us, to improve the safety of our neighbourhood, its children, pets, elderly and disabled.

We welcome and appreciate the trial and it has made a clear and positive impact on the quality of life and safety in our neighbourhood. Combined with the additional zebra crossings recently added on Lansdown Road, for which we thank the council most sincerely, there has been a demonstrable improvement in our safety as residents. This ETRO and liveable neighbourhood initiative is another positive step in ensuring that Bath is a liveable, thriving city for its residents.