

B&NES Council 20 November 2025 – statement by Robin Kerr, Bath Alliance for Transport and Public Realm – The Movement Strategy for Bath

The Bath Alliance for Transport and Public Realm comprises twenty one Bath stakeholder organisations with shared interests in excellent transport and public realm. We aim to support B&NES Council's transport effort in Bath and urge the Council to develop and deliver a comprehensive, long term transport plan.

We think the Movement Strategy is very good. We support the three well-balanced goals of the Strategy.

We strongly support the proposal that through traffic should use the Strategic Road Network and Main Road Network (the A46, A4 London Road, and A36), not the historic centre. We also strongly support the aim of reducing traffic in Queen Square and recovering it as a high-quality public space. The heart of the World Heritage Site is not the place for heavy traffic.

It's important to get the strategy right, but that's just a beginning. The challenge will be to implement the strategy, and that will require determination and detailed planning. The 'Levers' of the Strategy cover almost all key issues. It is good that these include broad timescales for implementing the various strands. We propose three 'quick wins':

Declassify the A4 through the city centre. All roads below the level of the Strategic and Major Road Networks are under B&NES' control¹. In particular, this includes the A4 through the centre, and it would be entirely consistent with the Strategy to declassify it. By itself that would have a limited impact (although it might discourage satnavs), but it would send a strong signal of your intent to 'create great quality places'.

Parking control is a powerful demand management tool which is also under B&NES' control. Reducing meter parking in the city centre to encourage drivers to use alternatives such as Park-and-Ride would be a quick win for the Strategy.

The Strategy calls for reduced levels of freight traffic using unsuitable streets. A third quick win would be to get Avon and Somerset Police to enforce the HGV limit through the centre, or for B&NES to seek additional enforcement powers to do so.

One major omission is any reference to a Park & Ride to the east of Bath. This is essential if traffic coming from the east is to be reduced. We hope you will reconsider this. With that proviso, the Strategy has the full support of the Alliance.

Lastly, the Local Plan and the Movement Strategy should be aligned. The current Local Plan refers to "a city centre that is free of all but essential traffic"². This text should be retained in the new Plan, rather than the feeble wording in the current draft.

1. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-road-classification-and-the-primary-route-network/guidance-on-road-classification-and-the-primary-route-network> paras 1.19 and 1.20

2. Composite Local Plan para 99. Para 112 refers to "a largely traffic-free centre by 2029". The current draft refers to "A pedestrian-oriented city centre".