

DEPUTATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Four deputations have been referred from Council on 10 December. The Cabinet Member will note the response given at that meeting and provide an update where appropriate.

- (a) Deputation concerning Tivoli Crescent Parking Issues - Mr Mark Dyson**
(Spokesperson)
- (b) Deputation concerning Clean Air, Lewes Road – Mr Duncan Blinkhorn**
(Spokesperson)
- (c) Deputation concerning Impact of Zone A Parking Scheme – Ms Jessica Balkwill** (Spokesperson)
- (d) Deputation concerning Preston Park Station Area – Zone A Parking – Mr Paul Crawford** (Spokesperson)

(a) Tivoli Crescent Parking Issues – Mark Dyson (Spokesperson)

“This deputation is brought on behalf of the residents of Tivoli Crescent with regard to the significant issues that they now face due to the failure of the local council to properly consider the impact of the recently introduced Controlled Parking Zone A to the local area. Prior to the introduction of the scheme on October 5th, we did not have anything like the problems we now face on a daily basis. The ensuing consultation leading to the introduction of the current scheme has been extremely poor and inadequate, and furthermore we have not had satisfactory responses to our many complaints since the schemes introduction thus far.

- In October 2007 residents of Tivoli Crescent received a letter asking them to vote, as well as canvassing their views on whether they wanted a residents parking scheme in their area or not. Due to a lack of any sufficient detail, many residents of Tivoli Crescent abstained from voting for or against the proposed parking scheme. Out of 138 properties surveyed, there was only a response rate of 44%, of which 64.5% said NO. On this basis the Council excluded us from further consultation.
- There was however much dissatisfaction regarding the inadequacies of the first consultation. Local resident Andy Nesbit, acted on behalf of residents by lobbying the council to be included in a second round of consultations. He was **informed** in an email (6/10/2008) quote "We will be consulting the area which is to be included in the scheme with full details over the summer and at the same time we will write to residents in Tivoli Crescent area explaining that roads Southwards are being consulted on a detailed design for a parking scheme and to check they don't want to be included,"
- He was then informed by the same council officer that he had been **misinformed** (23/6/09) and that quote "due to the high No" vote in the area it was agreed not to proceed with" the reconsultation of Tivoli Crescent. This so called 'high' NO vote represented a mere 38 out of 138 households in real terms.
- The residents were told that if they wished to be re-consulted, they should petition the council. Once it was known the measures that were going to be introduced, another resident (Keith Turvey), duly organised a petition, signed by a significant number of residents of Tivoli Crescent asking to be reconsulted on the parking scheme.
- This petition was presented to the environment committee by Councillor Ann Norman last August. However, yet again, the wishes of local residents were ignored.”

Response made by Councillor Theobald, Cabinet Member for Environment at Council, 10 December 2009 will be circulated at or prior to the meeting.

Tivoli Crescent Parking Issues - Supporting Information:

So what are the issues that have been created by the Councils so called Parking Strategy?

The Issues surrounding Displacement

With the introduction of this new residents parking scheme next to the Tivoli area, the council have essentially created approx. a 400 metre stretch of FREE PARKING right on the edge of a controlled parking zone, and a 2 minute walk (via the commonly used steps to Hampstead Rd.) from a busy commuter railway station at Preston Park. This is Tivoli Crescent. Residents now find it extremely difficult to park near to their house which is not an unreasonable expectation, with non residents cars displaced from the zone being left for days and even weeks. There is no overflow now available because Tivoli Crescent is bordered at either end by Woodside Avenue and The Drove - two roads now in new zone with its excessive restrictions. Take a drive along these roads and spot the difference! Even the council officer responsible has had to admit that:

"We do monitor schemes as they first go in and ask that residents give things some time to settle down. We do appreciate that currently commuters appear to be resisting paying to park, which has not been the case in other schemes..." Charles Field, Parking Strategy Manager. 10/09 email in response to official residents' complaints.

Residents now have first hand experience of the issues this has created. Most important are issues are around **safety and accessibility** which now affect families, children and the elderly.

- **Cars now park extremely close to each other.** What is the effect? Dorothy who is 86, and has suffered numerous falls in her own home and like Peter 84, have great difficulty in negotiating tightly parked cars to get into waiting transport to take them to meet family and friends. Can councillors imagine what it is like having to take a detour around several cars with an elderly resident who has great difficulty walking in order to get into a waiting vehicle? Other elderly residents with mobility or disability issues have also raised similar issues. This is a situation that has been created by the local council's parking scheme.
- **Cars routinely double park.** Families, trades people, visitors routinely double park in the street as they have little option. Parents with young children are understandably not prepared to leave children unattended in cars parked in a different street whilst they transfer their shopping. Trades people similarly have little option other than to double park when transferring heavy tools and equipment to sites. All of this adds to the congestion in the area with a number of vehicles regularly having to double park.
- **Parking on verges and corners .** This has become much more frequent creating added danger for children who play in the street. Visibility for traffic using the road has been reduced significantly.

These issues of **safety and accessibility** have been created by the council with the introduction of the residents parking scheme in the surrounding area. These issues need to be addressed immediately and we cannot wait another two years to be slotted into a future timetable. May we please remind you that the Council has legal obligations in this respect:

"The Council's powers and duties under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 must be exercised to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of all types of traffic and the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway."

What do Tivoli Crescent residents want?

It is now patently obvious that Tivoli Crescent should have been included in the scheme, judging by the criteria applied to other roads (Inwood Crescent & Millers Rd). In the March 2008 Item 146 Environment report to which we refer.

4.3.5 Only two roads were against inclusion and officer recommendation is that these roads could suffer displacement and cause confusion over scheme boundaries if they were excluded.

4.3.4 In order to draw up a viable scheme with clear boundaries, and to minimise any displacement, officer recommendation is to include all the roads around the Preston Park Station area in one parking scheme zone.

We have liaised with local residents through meetings and door to door discussions. The vast majority of residents believe that there is now no possible way forward without introducing a residents parking scheme in Tivoli Crescent. However, as zone A have found out to their cost any scheme need only be 9-6pm week days and should exclude weekends. Anything beyond this is excessive and punitive, spoiling the character of the area and simply designed to generate revenue for the council. We fully support residents in Zone A campaigning for a change to their scheme.

We have been informed by the Parking Strategy Manager that 'if, after the scheme has been running a while, residents would still like the times or days reviewed, then the best course of action would be to raise a petition stating what is preferred.' Residents have raised two petitions now and believe that Tivoli Crescent should be urgently included within the current Controlled Parking Zone A, with the restrictions on parking **9am-6pm excluding weekends.**"

(b) Clean Air, Lewes Road – Duncan Blinkhorn (Spokesperson)

“This week sees two events which highlight the links between fossil fuel emissions and public health.

Firstly, the Copenhagen Climate Conference, where nations are struggling to agree a plan to curb CO2 emissions.

Secondly, and closer to home, an anniversary – it’s five years since the Lewes Road and London Road were declared an Air Quality Management Area committing our City Council to make a plan, to curb vehicle emissions, along these key routes, to protect public health - a sort of local microcosm of the Copenhagen challenge.

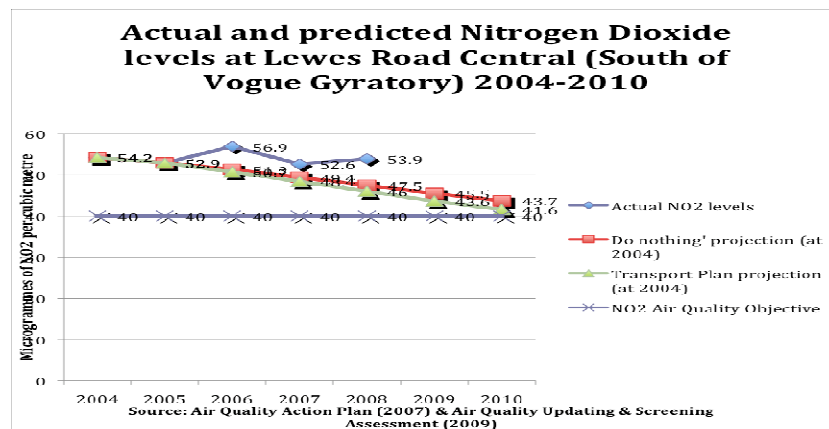
If the plan that comes out of Copenhagen achieves for the planet what the Air Quality Action Plan has so far for the Lewes Road, then we really are doomed.

We welcome the City Council’s recent commitment to the 10:10 climate campaign and the vision of a low-carbon Brighton & Hove. Lewes Road for Clean Air would like to see this commitment applied to transport. We have also signed up to 10:10 because we aim to reduce traffic on the Lewes Road by 10% during 2010. We plan to encourage motorists, who use the road, to make a pledge to find alternatives to car use on at least one day per week. However, we fear that the emerging Council policy of ‘modal choice’ – supporting unrestricted movement of cars, flies in the face of it’s 10:10 commitment and denies others the choice to breath air that is safe.”

Response made by Councillor Theobald, Cabinet Member for Environment at Council, 10 December 2009 will be circulated at or prior to the meeting.

Lewes Road Clean Air - Supporting Information:

“I’d like to show you a graph, based on the city’s Air Quality Action Plan which tells the story of Air Quality on the Lewes Road during the last five years, showing actual, against predicted, nitrogen dioxide levels.



You’ll see that after five years of monitoring and in spite of various measures to make the Lewes Road a ‘Sustainable Transport Corridor’, the air quality has, in reality, not improved at all. In 2008 it was much worse than even the ‘do nothing’ scenario had predicted. In May this year, planning permission for flats by the Vogue Gyratory (112-113 Lewes Road) was turned down because the air was considered so foul that it would be unsafe to open the windows. In fact you only have to spend a Friday afternoon outside the Lewes Road Co-op for your throat and lungs to tell you about the air.

Our Lewes Road for Clean Air campaign has been set up because of our deep concern about the lack of progress. We are part of Transport 21, a new umbrella of other local community groups intent on freeing our neighbourhoods from being overrun by cars and heavy traffic. We believe that Brighton & Hove can be a vibrant and prosperous city, and the Lewes Road can serve this as important transport corridor, *without* damaging the health of the people that live, work and travel along them and, one day, without damaging global climate.

The cocktail of chemicals in exhaust fumes all have a damaging impact on health - respiratory diseases, heart disease, strokes, cancers, and aggravation of conditions like asthma. A study by the European Commission (in 2005) found that air pollution reduces life expectancy by an average of nine months across the EU, resulting in 32,000 premature deaths in the UK alone each year (for Brighton & Hove that works out at 130). For those who live or work, around hotspots like the Lewes Road life expectancy can be reduced by a shocking 2-3 years.

Motor traffic accounts for nearly a quarter of the UK carbon footprint and generates noise, congestion and an atmosphere of danger, which further undermines our quality of life. For all these reasons we need much more concerted action to shift from private car-use to more sustainable transport.

The City’s Transport Plan points out that “only reductions in car use of 10% or 20% will achieve significant improvements in air quality that are measureable and noticeable”. The 10:10 climate campaign, which the council recently signed up to, has engaged thousands of people who believe that 10% is a realistic target for reducing emissions during the next year. We believe that such targets are achievable

(for CO2 and other pollutants) if we approach them with ambition and imaginative solutions.

So how busy is the Lewes Road and what would 10% look like? The Department for Transport records over 18,000 vehicle movements per day. Our own traffic surveys have found that (on an average daytime weekday) there are:

- 1,250 motor vehicles per hour (1,350 at rush hour)
- Three-quarters of which are private cars (not including 14% commercial vehicles)
- 60% of these carry only the driver.

We believe there is plenty of scope for reducing this part of the traffic. Our research has also found that many potential cyclists are scared to cycle along the Lewes Road because of the sheer volume of traffic and inappropriate parking.

Across Europe cities show what can be done, like Copenhagen. A city which, like Brighton & Hove, is a tourist destination and international conference venue with a thriving economy. They also suffer congestion, but are resolute in addressing it, introducing road pricing zones to discourage car use in the city centre. Excellent public transport and a true cycle city with 350 kilometres of cycle tracks, 'City Bikes' for hire from 100 locations, all taxis with racks for carrying bikes. Traffic lights along main routes are coordinated, in favour of cyclists during rush hour (Green Waves for cyclists). They are not complacent about what they have achieved and have upped their target for people cycling to work from 30% to 50%.

We believe there are many simple, cost effective solutions, which could be implemented quickly, within the next year even:

- Clear signage (perhaps using digital displays) to road users on the A270 to discourage car use and encourage alternatives: eg "Please help us reduce air pollution and carbon footprint, thank you for traveling by bus, bike or foot";
- Weekend Park & ride using regular buses stopping at existing vacant parking spaces (like at Brighton University sites);
- We're proposing a 'Bike Train' project of scheduled, frequent, daily mass bike rides between the Level and Falmer to create a safety-in-numbers environment which enables more people, including those who are nervous, to get on their bikes to work, to school and to university;
- New express bus routes across the city, avoiding the city centre.

There are plenty of other more ambitious solutions, including road pricing, which we would like to promote and discuss at a later stage. At the end of the day, if we can't shift the Lewes Road into a truly sustainable transport corridor, prioritising bus travel, cycling and walking, putting the health and wellbeing of people first, what hope do we, and all those bods in Copenhagen, have of achieving a low carbon future. Of course with enough will and determination we can sort this. I hope you can agree that 10% less traffic in 2010 is a good place to start."

(c) Deputation concerning Parking in Zone A – Jessica Balkwill (Spokesperson)

“We wish to express our concerns over the impact on residents of the Zone A Parking Scheme.”

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(d) Deputation concerning Zone A Parking - Preston Park Station Area – Paul Crawford (Spokesperson)

At last residents' parking difficulties in the Preston Park Station area have been resolved. The Zone A scheme has transformed the lives of residents in this area. At last we are no longer swamped by commuters, second car dumpers and weekend white van parkers. The scheme may not be perfect and no scheme will completely satisfy every single resident in every detail. But a reasonable mix of resident, paid-for commuter and visitor parking has been achieved.

The signatories to this deputation wish to emphasise to the Cabinet Member for Environment the following:-

1. The parking situation for residents has been radically improved by the implementation of the Zone A parking scheme.
2. The Zone A scheme should be allowed to settle for at least six months before any meaningful judgements about its effectiveness can be made. It is obvious that parking patterns are changing week by week and no changes should even be considered until an equilibrium has been reached.
3. Preston Park has waited five years to gain residents' parking protection. We are well aware that other areas in the City have considerable difficulties of the sort which we faced until the implementation of Zone A. It would be selfish to demand a re-consultation here when other residents in neighbouring communities still endure parking congestion with no immediate prospect of relief until consultation in those areas is conducted.
4. Residents immediately outside Zone A are now suffering the displacement congestion of which they were repeatedly warned in the debate about the boundaries of the zone. They made their choice. They should now wait their turn for re-consultation. Residents in other areas have yet to have their voice heard for the first time. Simple fairness entitles them to a hearing before Zone A 'refuseniks' are considered for a second time.
5. Our local ward councillors, Ken and Ann Norman and Pat Drake, and the officers directly concerned with the inception of the Zone A scheme, including Charles Field and Christina Lissasides, have worked very hard over a long period to ascertain the wishes of the residents in this area and to complete the implementation of a parking scheme reflecting these wishes. We would like to record officially a vote of thanks to all those involved in the lengthy process which has resulted in the successful parking scheme which residents in the vicinity of Preston Park Station now enjoy.

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