

STATEMENT TO ST GEORGES NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP

Support for Bristol City Council experimental traffic scheme for the Crews Hole/Beaufort Road area



Bristol Cycling Campaign support the original proposals of Bristol City Council. We consider the proposal to be a balanced and well considered resolution of an intolerable situation. The proposal is in the best of interests of most people living in and moving through the area. We think it highly likely that the experiment will prove successful in addressing all concerns.



Our reasons for supporting the Bristol City Council proposal include:

1. **The current road layout is intolerable.** The number of accidents in the area would be higher but it is avoided by some of those who might otherwise want to visit or pass through on foot, by bicycle or in a car.
2. It takes account of a full range of problems experienced by **different users** of the roads and paths in the area and by those who now **avoid the area** because of its problems.
3. Crews Hole and its surrounding area constitute a very important area for walking and cycling but the **main beneficiaries will be walkers**. People on bikes should be considered even though this is not primarily a cycling scheme. The City, the St George Neighbourhood Partnership and Bristol Cycling Campaign want to encourage more walking and cycling. Indeed St George Neighbourhood Partnership has recognised Public Rights of Ways as one of its priority areas.
4. The Bristol City Council proposal looks forward to a strategic goal, shared by The Bristol Cycling Campaign, of making Bristol's transport infrastructure more sustainable and more accessible to a wider range of users, including the existing users and those who will be using it in the future. It anticipates a lower dependency on motor vehicles in a more sustainable future while providing for current use.
5. The Crews Hole/Beaufort Road scheme includes a **period of monitoring** so that users can make adjustments gradually as they use new routes and make different journey plans. If significant problems persist once these adjustments have been made, improvements can be made on the basis of experience. The whole point of experimental traffic orders and schemes is to

explore and understand the practical effect of complex works. Allowing them to be modified or removed if they don't work as planned is to be expected. If no attempt is made to introduce a fully considered scheme like the one proposed by Bristol City Council then only the most uncontroversial and trivial changes will ever be made. In effect, the current convenience of a relatively small number takes precedence over the possibility of a better set of arrangements for all.

6. The experimental scheme could yield results where even those who anticipate negative consequences find that the situation actually improves over time. An extra mile, for example, that might be added to some journeys once the scheme is in operation might be compensated for in reductions in the waiting times that exist on the current layout when queues develop at pinch points. A steadier flow through the short one-way sections and reduced conflict where cars are parked on the carriageway could make all journey times more predictable and less anxiety provoking. Week by week savings on fuel usage, time spent and wear and tear could leave even the most radically affected drivers no worse off than they are now.
7. **Young, elderly, disabled and less affluent people would all benefit** from the proposed scheme but such people are generally under-represented or ignored when the convenience or interests of vehicle owners are threatened. It is the job of councillors to speak on behalf of people whose voices are less likely to be heard in a public forum. Bristol Cycling Campaign believes that walking and cycling from a to b should become feasible and comfortable for anyone between the ages of 8 and 80.
8. The area is clearly mainly used as a rat run by vehicles whose drivers are able to make alternative choices about routes and modes of transport. Local residents stand to gain most from an environment less dominated by fast traffic with improved links for walking.
9. The alternative proposal made by the Save Crews Hole Access Road group **displaces problems** to other areas and particularly to Beaufort Road. By replacing filtered one-way access, cyclist provision and pedestrian improvement with speed tables it fails to address the issue of narrow roads which lie at the heart of the current situation. The alternative proposal also ignores the aspirations of Bristol as a whole and makes the future implementation of a strategic cycling network less likely, thereby putting more pressure on car-commuting. We oppose this alternative as being worse than useless.

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