

In January local routes across Highbury were closed to motor vehicles, to create **LOW TRAFFIC NEIGHBOURHOODS (LTNs)** in Highbury West and Highbury Fields. The Council used emergency Covid legislation to rush this through, **AVOIDING LOCAL CONSULTATION.**

The **message that is being promoted** is that to **encourage active travel** streets need to be made **safer** and **cleaner** by reducing the number of cars¹ on the roads, and that this is **an urgent need**. This extensive road closure model is based on experiments in very different locations to Highbury, including the outer London suburb of Waltham Forest.

There is widespread opposition to LTNs, both here and across London. **SO WHY ARE THE HIGHBURY LTNs SO DIVISIVE?**

- Are they the 'solution' to problems that Highbury does not have?
- Do they actually do more harm than good?
- Are there better ways of addressing Highbury's peak time cut-through traffic issues, that better meet the needs of the wider community?

We believe the answer to these questions is **YES.**



¹ Islington Council has not specified what reduction in car numbers on the roads would meet its LTN goals. Its generally stated goals include a 15.7% reduction in vehicle kms in Islington by 2041, against a 2016 baseline and a 6.9% reduction in cars owned by Islington residents by 2041 (Draft Islington Transport Strategy 2019 - page 29).

Crisis? What Crisis?

Islington was already bucking the national trend of rising car dependency and doing fantastically well.

- **81%** of average daily trips made by Islington residents are already 'active and sustainable' (made by walking, cycling or public transport), which already exceeds the Mayor's 2041 target for London.²
- Only **16.6%** of all trips in Islington are made by car, amongst the lowest of the Inner London boroughs.³
- Car ownership in Islington has fallen to **31%** of households. This is the **second-lowest rate** of car ownership of all English local authorities.⁴
- Our residential roads are very safe. The majority of Islington's serious road traffic incidents occur, as you might expect, on the borough's **TLRN (main roads that TfL is responsible for)**, which are the busiest roads in the borough.⁵
- Motor vehicles are a **minor contributor** to pollution in our residential areas.
 - Only **5.9%** of Islington's **total carbon emissions** are from vehicles on **minor roads**.⁶
 - Only **6%** of Islington's **nitrogen oxide emissions** are from our **minor roads**.⁷

LTNs are clearly a 'solution' to problems that we did not actually have within the Highbury LTN space.

A problem that we did, however, was **peak time cut-through traffic**⁸ enabled by the rise of sat nav/directions apps. LTNs have provided a blunt tool 'solution' to this problem, by indiscriminately sweeping both cut-through and local vehicles out of Highbury and onto our boundary roads.

² Draft Islington Transport Strategy 2019 - page 13, and Mayor's Transport Strategy March 2018 – page 21

³ Draft Islington Transport Strategy 2019 - page 13

⁴ Draft Islington Transport Strategy 2019 - page 22 (2016 data)

⁵ Draft Islington Transport Strategy 2019 - page 41

⁶ Islington Council's Vision 2030: Building a Net Zero Carbon Islington by 2030 - page 59 (2018 data)

⁷ Draft Islington Transport Strategy 2019 - page 23 (2016 data, with forecasts for 2020 indicating a significant reduction)

⁸ Islington Council has not gathered any data on what traffic is cut-through and what is local. The extent of the cut-through traffic problem has not therefore been properly recorded.

Doing more harm than good

This is what people in our community have been telling us about their LTN experience:

- **Pollution on main roads is increasing.** The more gridlocked these roads become the more idling polluting engines there are upon them.
- **LTNs are restricting the quality of life of vulnerable people, such as the elderly as well as children and adults with disabilities,** for whom public transport and active travel can be less accessible, and who rely on cars to give them mobility and independence.
- **Local businesses are suffering losses in trade** (from passing customers and from those that visit from outside our area), and difficulties with both making and receiving deliveries. This is impacting on livelihoods.
- **LTNs place unnecessary burdens on local people and their visitors,** who are now having to make longer, more complicated, and more time-consuming journeys, routinely exacerbated by emergency road closures for utilities maintenance or repair, creating yet more gridlock and stress.
- **Streets feel less safe for women and older unescorted children,** with roads in the LTN zones often being empty, particularly at night.



A fairer way forward for our community

It is not fair to solve Highbury's **cut-through traffic** problem by transferring it plus Highbury's own local traffic onto our main road neighbours.

A more **considerate and balanced intervention** to address peak time cut-through traffic, which reasonably allows people connected to Highbury to continue to go about their business, includes:

- Camera-enforced traffic filters operating at **peak traffic times only**, thus keeping traffic that is not connected to Highbury out at peak times, while allowing drivers to travel freely within Highbury at times when there is **reduced volume**.
- Traffic filter cameras to be **switched off on weekends and on bank holidays**, there being no cut-through traffic concerns relating to school spaces and commuter traffic at these times.
- **ANPR** camera fine **exemption** at all times for people with disabilities, Highbury businesses, Highbury residents and all licenced drivers of passenger transport vehicles.
- Option to purchase 'Connected Visitor' day permit.

Allowing free circulation of traffic at non-peak times would **correspondingly ease traffic pressure** on already very busy main boundary roads.

These straightforward adjustments would reasonably moderate some of the harm caused by the '**all or nothing**' approach that prevails under the existing LTN schemes⁹.

The LTN trial should be **adjusted** along these lines by the Council **now**, and then reviewed under a **full and fair consultation**.

⁹ Operating examples of where some flexibility has been built into ANPR filter operation include the London boroughs of Ealing, Lewisham, Hammersmith & Fulham and Waltham Forest.

Make your voice count

If, like us, you don't like what the Council has done to our roads, and you feel that it is not listening, then make sure that your voice counts.

Important

OBJECT BY 11th JUNE by emailing or writing to Public Realm at publicrealm@islington.gov.uk. State the grounds for your objection, and for which Highbury LTN scheme (Highbury West and/or Highbury Fields), specifying very clearly that **you wish your email to be recorded as an objection**.

QUESTION the electoral candidates on their views regarding LTNs and **VOTE** in the 6th May Mayoral, London Assembly and Highbury West Ward **ELECTIONS**.

JOIN US at Keep Highbury Moving by emailing keephighburymoving@gmail.com sharing your experience of the Highbury LTNs and subscribing to our mailing list.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

www.KeepHighburyMoving.com

FOLLOW US

 @HighburyKeep

SIGN OUR KEEP Highbury MOVING PETITION

 www.change.org

Thank you for sharing community spirit for a better and fairer solution to peak time cut-through traffic in Highbury.

Let's Keep Highbury Moving, by working together