

Information about Brent Healthy Neighbourhoods



Preston Area Healthy Neighbourhood Engagement Report October 2021

Introduction

This report is a summary of the feedback provided to Living Streets Engagement Officer by the residents of Preston Area Healthy Neighbourhood in Brent.

The report is intended to assist Brent Council in making decisions about whether to adopt the Healthy Neighbourhood in its original design, whether to modify the design, or to halt the scheme at this location. The next step for the continued schemes is to run a full trial, allowing council officers the opportunity to understand how traffic responds to the measures introduced and whether they have the desired effect. This report will help determine if the trials should go ahead for each scheme.

The report pulls together eight weeks of responses from the engagement programme into key themes, along with positive ideas from residents to redirect or limit traffic. It is not an expert report about traffic conditions and does not assess the merits of any particular scheme in terms of traffic management but rather the public's perception of how traffic impacts the area.

Engagement, as distinct from consultation, encourages residents to explore the issues of traffic affecting them, consider the potential benefits of the proposals, weigh up the impact on their daily lives and suggest alternatives if the design isn't right. It is not only about listening, but also prompting a dialogue for residents to think about how they use their streets and reconsider their dependence on cars – this is a key objective for longer term strategies locally and nationally.

Living Streets was commissioned to undertake the engagement programme in recognition of their respected reputation, experience in working with Government, local authorities and communities on traffic and transport issues, their skills in community engagement, as well as representing good value for Council budgets.

A national Low Traffic Neighbourhoods programme

Low Traffic Neighbourhoods have been in existence for many years as a tool to remove through traffic on side streets and ensure safer walking and cycling in residential areas. Such changes to road layouts have been going on since the 1970s.

But following the Coronavirus pandemic in 2020, there was a new urgency to create safer space for “active travel”. In May 2020, the Government helped Councils by investing £250 million into an Emergency Active Travel Fund to pay for low cost, temporary measures that would significantly “reallocate road space for walking and cycling”. To reclaim that space, low traffic neighbourhoods were introduced on a scale not seen before and by using Emergency Traffic Orders, at a speed which communities sometimes found difficult to accommodate.

As the pandemic continued through the year, both the Government and Transport for London recognised the opportunity afforded by these emergency changes to address wider transport issues. The continuing growth in motor transport brings a heavy cost – road deaths, pollution, congestion, road rage, decline in the urban environment and unequal access to public road space for cycling, walking, scooting or skating.

At the same time, the convenience of motor vehicles and their image as a status symbol continue to dominate our social perceptions. Furthermore, the recent development of Sat Nav technology introduced to vehicles also allowed drivers to see any route as viable, including back streets unsuited to heavy traffic.

These factors create the challenge faced today by Councils and wider society, forming the background to the work carried out in Brent by Living Streets.

Funding for Low Traffic Neighbourhoods in Brent

In 2020 Brent Council applied to TfL for funding of 10 Healthy Neighbourhoods. The schemes were geographically located side by side so they could work together and provide interconnecting benefits for those residents wishing to find quieter, safer routes for walking and cycling.

The aim of the Healthy Neighbourhoods programme was to offer residents the chance to reshape their local streets and reduce the negative impacts of vehicles and traffic in residential areas: speeding, parking issues, “rat running”, limiting road danger near schools and the unwanted behaviours reported by residents (for example, excessive noise, shouting, aggression and horns, reckless driving on pavements, parking illegally).

However, there are **funding limitations** for these schemes. The low traffic neighbourhood funding cannot not address every traffic problem experienced by residents. Ownership of roads and management of traffic is shared with Transport for London on bus routes and main roads. Brent cannot make swift or unilateral decisions about, for example, the phasing of traffic lights, if it should impact on a bus route.

Funding for zebra crossings and cycle or pedestrian infrastructure is also not available, even where these are located in traffic hotspots near schools as they are regarded as Safe Routes to School concerns rather than an essential measure for safe walking and cycling – and must therefore be paid for in a different way.

Brent Healthy Neighbourhoods Programme

Brent has a challenge with regard to traffic levels and communities appear to be experiencing a change in the way drivers behave, reporting more aggression and blatant flouting the rules of the road in some places. Car ownership in Brent increased by 11,000 vehicles between 2004 – 2015 and in 2017 stood at 98,444 vehicles. Across the borough, it is not uncommon for households to have multiple cars.

The graph below clearly shows the trend in Brent of a steep increase in motor vehicle activity.

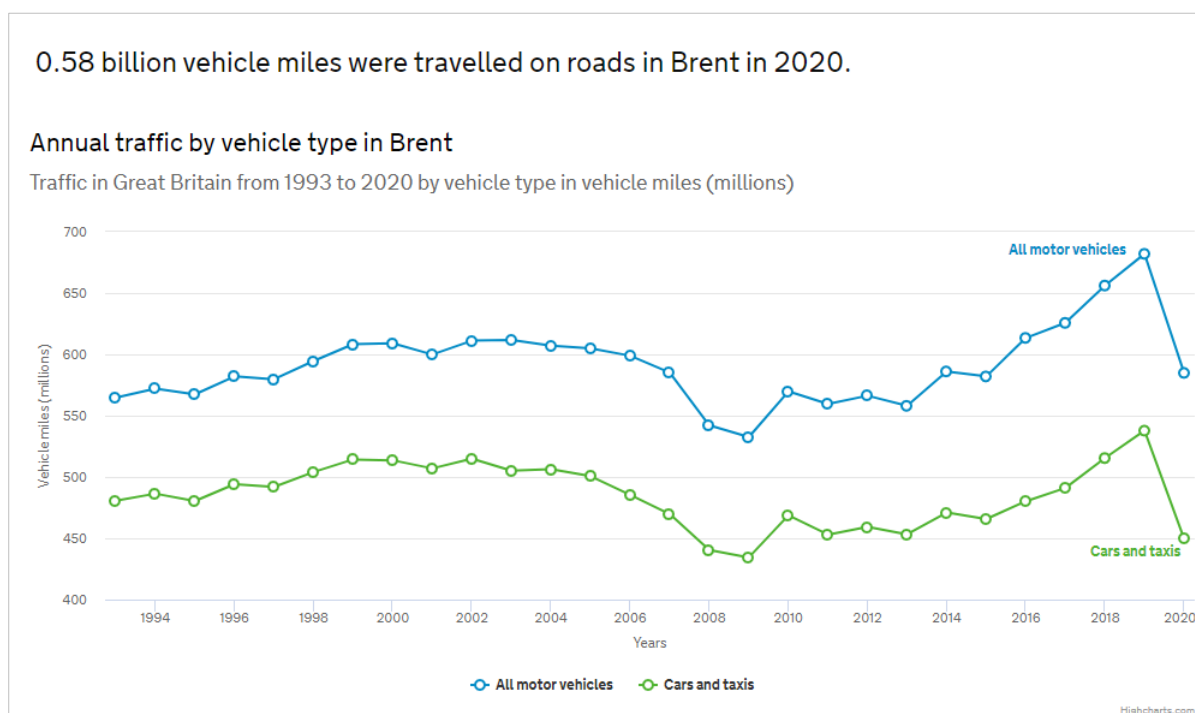


Figure 1 – Annual traffic by vehicle type in Brent (Source: Road Traffic Statistics from the Department of Transport)

In 2019, there were 3780 people seriously injured on London’s roads with 1282 of those pedestrians and a 21% increase in injuries to cyclists on 2018 figures (773).

In Brent, total casualties in 2019 alone numbered **2012 people**, including 204 pedestrians and 80 cyclists. Fatal and serious injuries in 2019 totalled **119 people**. Of the 6 reported deaths so far on Brent’s roads in 2021, 3 of them were pedestrians and 1 a cyclist. This provides the dangerous backdrop to a huge daily traffic movement, when it encounters more vulnerable road users.

Sadly, the impact of car or vehicle fatalities falls hardest on the young and old in our population. In Brent, between 2016 – 2018, **44 children** under 17 years were killed or seriously injured in Brent.

Another new trend impacting on residents in Brent is the shift from driving on main roads to residential streets, to shave time off journeys and avoid congestion on the main roads. This is going on everywhere, enabled since 2009 by sat nav technology and illustrated in the graph below.

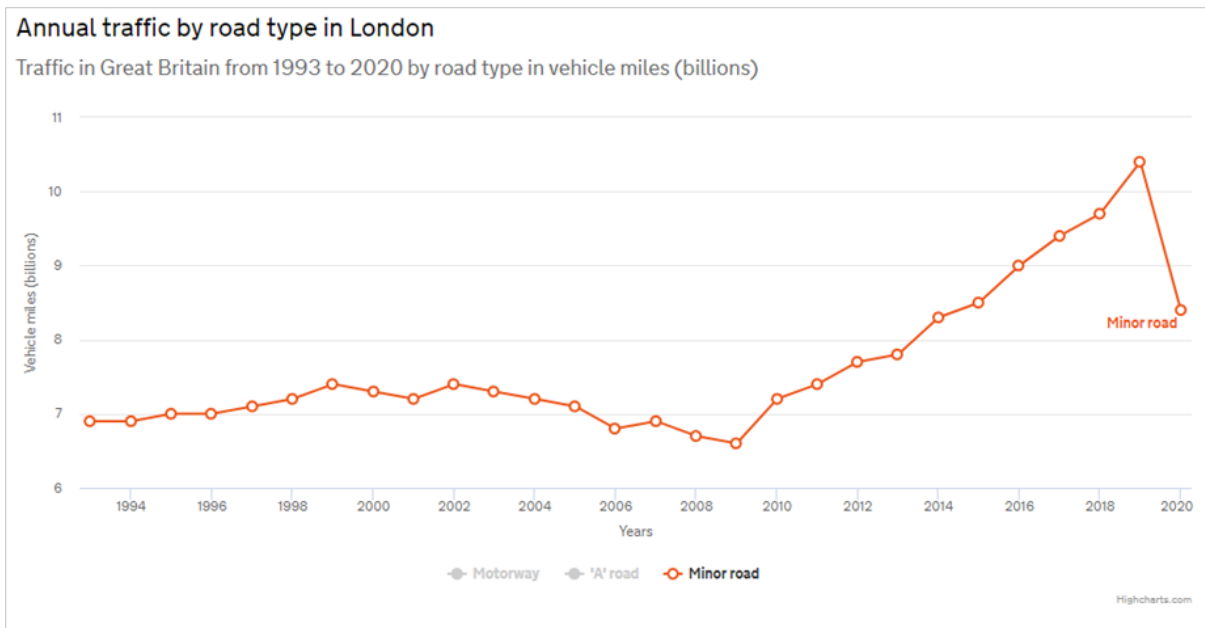


Figure 2 – Annual traffic by road type in London (Source: Road Traffic Statistics from the Department of Transport)

And Brent residents aren't taking enough exercise – leading to a high incidence of diabetes type 1 & 2, heart disease and obesity. 54% of adults in Brent are either overweight or obese and childhood obesity rates are higher than the England average (JSNA Health & Lifestyle 19/20)

In response to these concerns, and mindful of the “climate emergency”, Brent has developed long term strategies to tackle levels of traffic and promote a change to transport mode choices i.e., whether residents choose to walk, cycle, drive or take public transport. These strategies include

Air Quality Action Plan 2017 -22

The Air Quality Action Plan identified transport as a focus for action and dis-incentivising car usage as a priority stating, “We will take steps to limit or reduce the use of vehicles where we can”.

The extension of the ULEZ into Brent is widely seen as an important step to improved air quality. It may be the case for heavy goods and diesel vehicles, but most cars are compliant already.

However, the recent **Brent Breathes Report Dec 2019** (Air Quality Scrutiny Enquiry of the Resources & Public Realm Scrutiny Committee) called on Brent Council to

Acknowledge that our air quality objectives will not be met without a modal shift in the way we go out and about in the borough, with a greater number and proportion of future journeys involving cycling, walking and public transport. This requires measures to support the greater use of active travel and public transport usage, and not simply encourage existing drivers to switch to electric and hybrid cars.

This is one of 9 powerful recommendations pulling together priorities for traffic and transport, education, green space / parks, health, housing as well as reaching out to residents to engage around the issues.

Transport Strategy 2015 -35 (with a review in 2021)

The growth of sustainable modes of transport are viewed as essential as the population increases year on year and in a consultation which took place in 2014, 84% wanted walking and cycling promoted. There is low uptake of cycling in Brent (only 1%) and fears about road safety along with a poorly designed cycling environment are key barriers. According to the strategy, the development of a network of quiet, on-road routes avoiding major links would be the best way to encourage cycling and reduce concerns over road safety.

Furthermore, walking levels could improve by enhancing public realm and the walking environment to create pleasant, safe spaces, allowing the 5% increase in walking as a form of transport that Brent hopes to achieve by 2030.

Interestingly, despite recognising the impact of motorised traffic on levels of cycling and the environment, the Transport Strategy ultimately avoids calling for reduced ownership and usage of individual cars – an issue many residents asked for in their feedback.

Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy 2021 - 30

Transport is a key theme, with transport contributing 22% to the overall carbon emissions of the borough. Although cars / motorcycles made up 32% of transport mode in 2017/18 and walking made up 28%, the dominance of vehicles in the street environment impacts people's willingness to choose active travel. As a result, Brent recognise they need to take action to "support and encourage active travel".

Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2021

"Healthy living – making the healthy choice the easy choice"

Brent's 2018 Resident Attitudes Survey showed the behaviour most people wanted to change was levels of exercise (37%) and this Strategy could demonstrate the link between exercise and mode of travel – that informal exercise such as walking, can bring the same benefits and that self-care can include such exercise to replace usage of motor vehicles and private cars, thereby linking it with the other strategies.

Physical Activity Strategy 2016 – 21

The JSNA 2019/20 highlighted serious underlying health issues affecting Brent residents, many related to lifestyle choices such as lack of exercise. The Physical Activity Strategy references the Active Travel Programme and the opportunities to develop regular exercise by changing transport mode away from car usage. In Brent, only 6.2% of the population travel actively, compared to 8.4% across London.

A key objective of this Strategy is: *To achieve permanent behaviour change by helping people to build physical activity into the fabric of their everyday lives.*

However, active travel doesn't appear to feature in the actions related to this objective, so perhaps an opportunity is being missed here to join these plans up and give stronger emphasis to the benefits of active travel.

Existing Preston Area transport context

Preston Area is home to around 15,474 people (2011). It is located between the wards of Barnhill, Tokyngton & Northwick Park in the north-west part of the borough, close to the border with Harrow. Preston ward is a distinctive sharply pointed shape, bounded on two sides by railway lines: the Metropolitan line serving Preston Road station and the Bakerloo line serving the station of South Kenton.

Preston Road, running along the eastern boundary, is the main commercial route serving the area, linking the area with Wembley to the south and Kenton and Kingsbury to the north. It is lined with shops, but the road is more of a thoroughfare than a destination at present. There is little sense of place and many of the smaller independent shops appear to be struggling. Traffic counts before the pandemic showed that Preston Road experiences an average of 16,349 vehicles per day.

In terms of cycling infrastructure, it appears to be limited – with painted cycles on Grasmere but no connected provision on Windermere or Carlton Avenue East, poor signage (small and difficult to see) and a noticeable lack of cycle hangars for storage. All streets are heavily parked both sides requiring cyclists to share the carriageway with all vehicles across the area.

Preston Road has intermittent lane provision – with lanes from Logan Road to the junction with Carlton Avenue East – but then no lanes again across the shopping zone. The central paved section dividing the road also prevents cyclists turning across lanes into side roads.

Upcoming housing developments may impact on the area, with developments planned for the existing library site at the junction of Preston Road with Carlton Avenue East, a busy location. These physical environment of Preston Area gives context to the concepts of 'liveable neighbourhoods' and 'low traffic streets.' In some ways, the suburban, open layout and feel of Preston Area makes it an attractive area to improve walking and cycling amenity, allowing some streets to be prioritised for active travel routes. However, the attitudes and behaviour of drivers noted about can limit potential mode shift too.

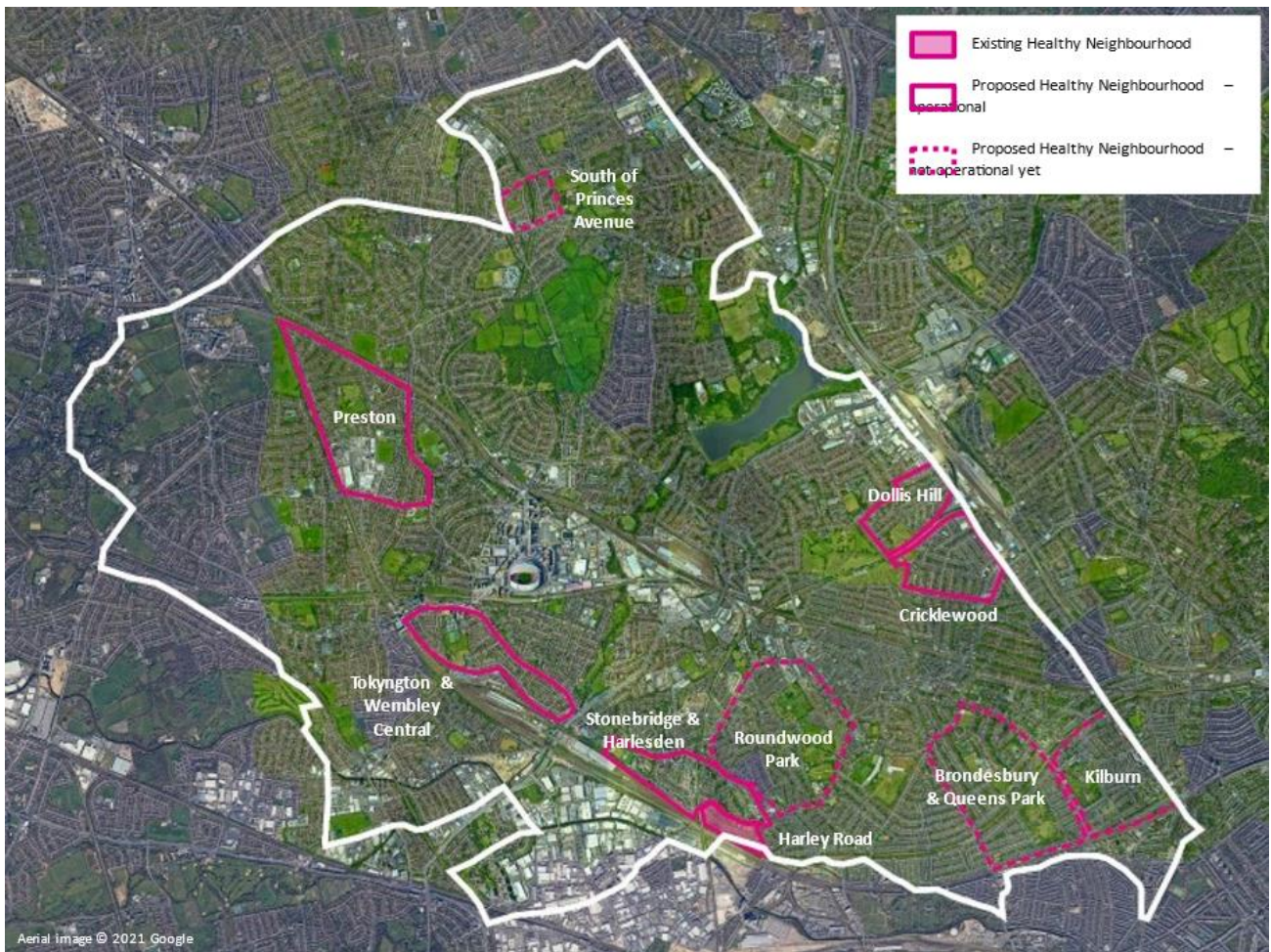


Figure 3 - Location of Brent Healthy Neighbourhood schemes across the borough

This map illustrates the series of Healthy Neighbourhood schemes developed across Brent, some working together across a larger area to ensure a network of quietways for walking and cycling.

The Healthy Neighbourhood area

The Preston Area Healthy Neighbourhood largely follows the ward boundaries and, along with the railway lines and Preston Road, is bounded by East Lane (A4088) to the South. The streets are predominately residential with 1930s semi-detached houses and large front gardens, with many paved over for vehicle parking. While the northern half of the area is primarily residential, south of Carlton Avenue East is a large industrial and commercial area and more contemporary infill residential development. Blenheim Gardens and St Augustine's Avenue in the southeast corner are established residential areas of the same era as the northern area.

The secondary route serving the area is Carlton Avenue East and Windermere Avenue, with a small local centre on Windermere Avenue, close to South Kenton station. These two roads carry a main bus route and are used by drivers Preston Park Primary School and Preston Manor Lower School. The carriageway has parking along both sides and has centreline markings, but is relatively narrow, not easily allowing for passing of larger vehicles and leading to congestion. This is a leafier route

lined with trees, with wide verges, and could be an attractive route for walking and cycling. However, for cyclists the narrow carriageway, parked cars, buses may make the route unsuitable. It also has some speed humps, indicating how that this straight road could be attractive for fast driving. Carlton Avenue East traffic counts show an average of 3,068 vehicles each day.

Grasmere Avenue is a straight street running parallel to the railway, connecting between Preston Road and the northern end of Windermere Avenue. It forms part of Local Cycle Network route 45, connecting from Harrow to Battersea Bridge via Notting Hill and Kensington.

Many of the roads are long and straight, allowing and potentially encouraging drivers to speed. Streetscape enhancement work has recently taken place to restore the attractive verges, kerbs, trees and paving that makes walking pleasant.

Traffic volume data collected for Brent in Preston Area shows traffic levels on residential streets to be significant: 351 average vehicles per day on Thirlmere Gardens, 1,233 on Grasmere and 346 on Montpelier Rise. In comparison, 1,799 on Windermere and 3,068 on Carlton Vale East.

Air pollution data shows the worst pollution for Preston Area is very much focussed around the main roads – possibly reflecting the more spacious layout of homes and roads in this area as well as nearby Preston Area open green space. Emissions of 42.17 of NO₂ on Preston Road breach 40 (ug/m³), the legal limit. Meanwhile, Grasmere Avenue shows 32.8, comparable with the same pollution reading on Carlton Vale East.

These reading dropped significantly during the pandemic when traffic reduced, reflecting the strong relationship between vehicle emissions and air quality.

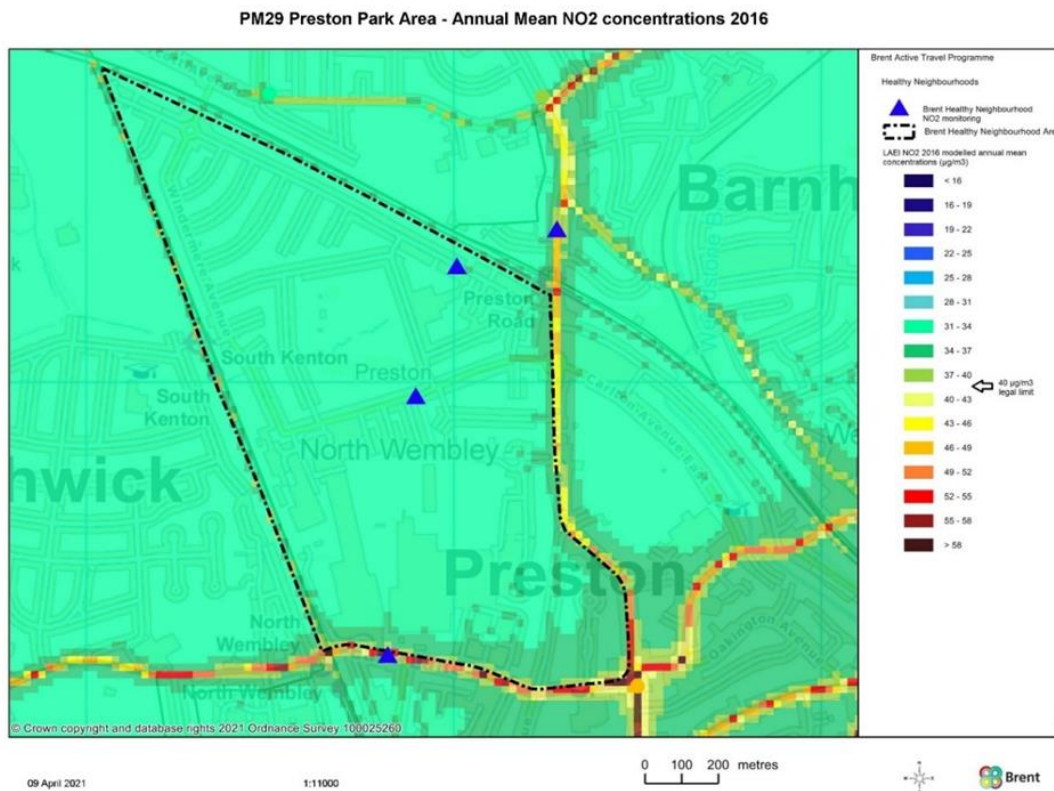


Figure 4 - Air Quality monitoring (2016)

For residents, shopping journeys seem to be less to the local shops on foot but rather to Sainsbury's supermarket in the north, via Draycott Avenue or Asda in Wembley Park by car.

A school street has been introduced at Preston Park Primary School which has been sustained by the school over the past year, albeit for a more limited stretch of road than was originally planned. The hope is that the input of residents can enable the low traffic measures and the school street to work together to protect more safe space for children walking and cycling in the area.

There are issues at and around Preston Road caused by articulated lorries and commercial vehicles making deliveries to the smaller convenience stores (Coop and Tesco).

Preston Area Healthy Neighbourhood Scheme

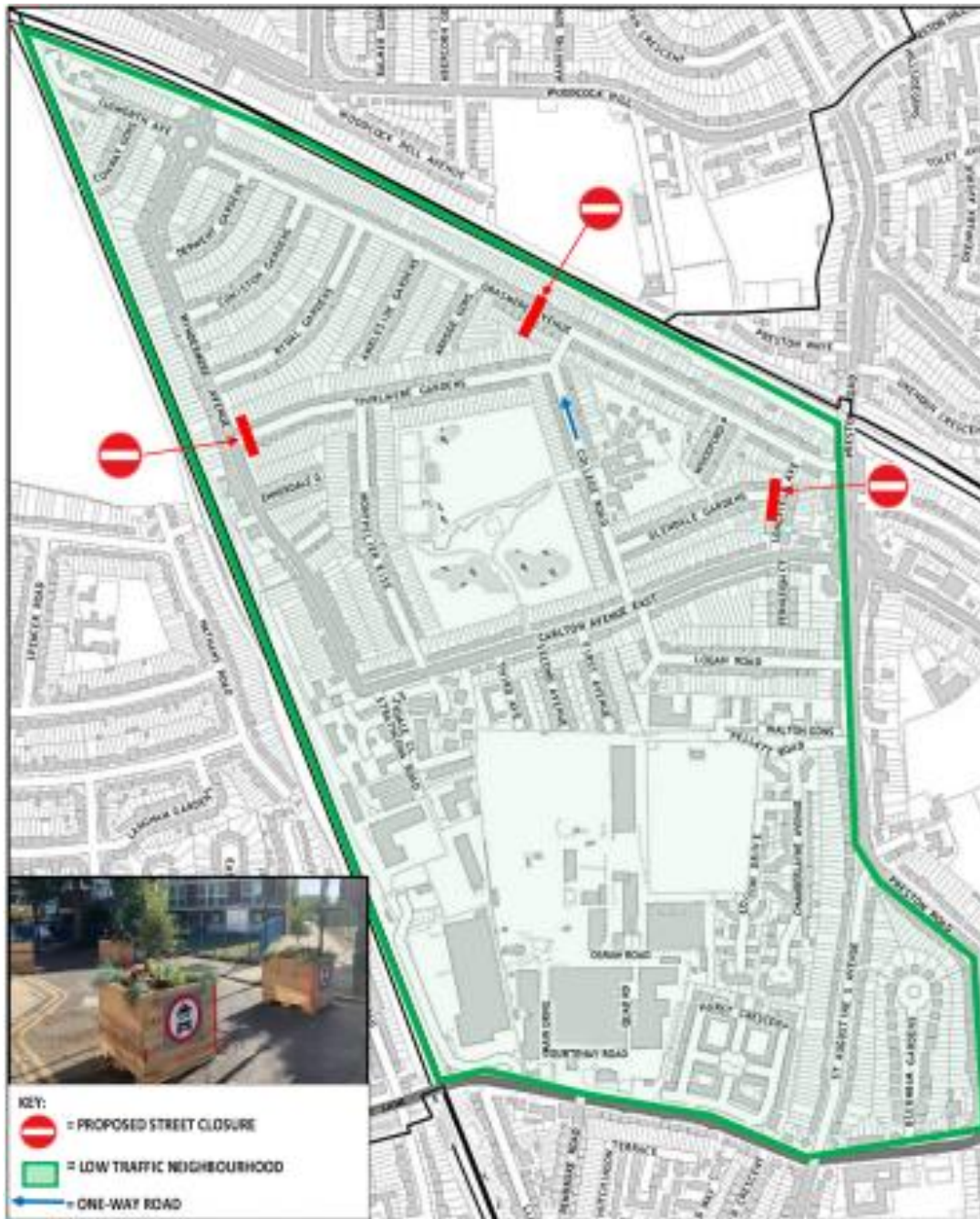


Figure 6 - Preston Area Healthy Neighbourhood scheme.

The main objective of this Healthy Neighbourhood is to deter and prevent motor vehicle drivers from using the neighbourhood's residential streets to avoid delays on surrounding roads. To achieve this objective, the original scheme introduced a series of 'modal filters' in the northern area of the neighbourhood on Grasmere Avenue, Thirlmere Gardens and Glendale Gardens, which closed residential streets to motor through-traffic.

Motor traffic currently uses the area’s streets to move between Preston Road, in the south-east, to Draycott Avenue in the north-east, with through-routes to Northwick Park Hospital and Harrow town centre. Grasmere Avenue provides a particularly direct route between these streets, avoiding the congestion on Windermere Avenue. Grasmere Avenue sees an average of 1,200 per day and 350 vehicles each day on Thirlmere Gardens. While traffic levels on Thirlmere Gardens are comparatively low, the closure on Grasmere Avenue could encourage drivers to divert onto Thirlmere Gardens, hence the inclusion of a modal filter here.



Figure 7 - Modal filter on Grasmere Avenue.

Preston Area resident feedback

Participation levels

The table below illustrates the participation of residents in the engagement programme between the end of July and end of September 2021. Residents could take part in multiple options.

Engagement option	Numbers taking part
Walkabout	9
Resident meeting	Approx. 40 (29 named)
Online meetings (2)	6

Online or hard copy surveys	128
Street chats	31
Resident association meeting	2
Councillors	2
TOTAL	218

Top 5 streets responding to the Healthy Neighbourhood survey:

1. Carlton Avenue East - 14
2. Grasmere Avenue – 14
3. Montpelier Rise - 12
4. Thirlmere Gardens – 12
5. College Road – 8

Overarching themes of Preston Area resident feedback

Preston Area residents don't agree about the traffic in their streets. Drivers are passionate they want all the roads to remain open, and the residents meeting of over 40 people was populated with people who like to routinely drive with only 3 people indicating they preferred not to.

The polarisation which comes from drivers unwilling to allow road space shared with other modes makes it difficult to consider alternative options to driving. People who did not go with the loud majority in the residents meeting were marginalised and treated in a hostile way, making it an uncomfortable space for difference of opinion. Some people in Preston Area do prefer to cycle and during the engagement we heard a few of their voices.

However, face to face chats with residents on doorsteps along Grasmere and its connecting streets revealed many people **did** support the traffic restriction on that road as well as others who relied on walking as a means of transport. Some people wanted the flexibility of a timed closure, operating only at peak hours/ outside peak hours.

a) Traffic issues affecting the Preston Area

Traffic is impacting negatively on most people's lives in the area – the surveys show 53% of the 126 people who responded to a question about how their lives were impacted by traffic identified a problem, primarily from speeding but also from irresponsible driving, illegal parking and noise.

Speeding is easy where cars have shifted into front gardens, opening up clear roads for dangerous driving, especially outside peak hours when roads are quieter. Dodging in and out of parked cars is another feature of driving in this residential area, as drivers speed up to reach the next space before any oncoming vehicle. During the walkabout, speeding was mentioned for Longfield, Grasmere and Windermere.

Despite road humps (and 20 mph speed limit) many drivers drive at dangerous speeds along our roads. While cycling, many drivers consider it's their right of way when there's only a narrow gap between rows of parked cars.

Parents who drive their children to school and park in residential streets were a focus of complaints, especially for residents living near a school. Manoeuvring, parking across driveways, on pavements and double yellow lines was reported by residents of Glendale, College Road and Carlton Vale East, making it dangerous for children to walk to school.

Some parents have tried to travel actively in the area, but driver behaviour and traffic volumes are deterring these choices:

I would love to do the school run on bikes with my kids, however, the roads don't feel safe (Carlton Avenue East and Windermere Avenue feel particularly dangerous). We did try to cycle my daughter to nursery (on Forty Lane) and my husband nearly got knocked off by aggressive drivers 3 times.

So, then we tried to take the 223 bus, but its lack of frequency, reliability and low capacity at peak times made that impossible, so we ended up driving (it's a 35 minute walk or a 10minute drive).

Generally, low uptake of bus transport (9%) by survey respondents suggests that the 223 bus is not frequent or reliable enough, so many people regard their travel options as limited.

Cycling is widely perceived as difficult or dangerous and to promote cycling and support cyclists better, a safe traffic free route emerges as important for the area:

Grasmere Avenue is about the worst part of any of the local London Cycling Network routes. The problem is that it is parked on both sides, sufficiently narrow that it only leaves room for one motor vehicle at a time, and not enough room for a cyclist to safely get between the vehicle and parked cars

Furthermore, Preston Road's concrete central barrier prevents easy turns for cyclists into Grasmere Avenue and the area overall lacks well designed cycling connections, for example, at the South Kenton underpass or linking Strathcona Road and East Lane.

There are serious safety concerns around the **Windermere/ Lulworth roundabout**, highlighted by respondents throughout the engagement, particularly for active travel. The concrete wall below forces cyclists into the path of traffic, possibly wide lorries, on a very narrow underpass.

Crossing the roundabout with wide splay junctions, traffic parked across all arms and large commercial vehicles reducing visibility leads to a dangerous environment for walking and cycling, especially children using it on the route to school.



Figure 8 - Windermere Avenue underpass



Figure 9 – Aerial view of the Lulworth/ Windermere roundabout showing parked vehicles

b) Specific reasons the scheme is not supported

- For the majority of residents who drive, there is evident dislike of the healthy neighbourhood restrictions which many see as unnecessary and inconvenient.
- People were concerned about driving more on busy roads and losing their shortcuts. Although 53% wanted the Council to take action on transport, 51% either didn't want, or probably didn't want a traffic filter on their street.

It restricts access for actual local residents. The temporary filters that are currently in place on Thirlmere Gardens and Grasmere result in much longer drives for local residents to get home from around South Kenton. This in itself adds energy wastage and pollution. If the filter was monitored by a camera, and local residents were exempt, then it may be better.

- Some journeys become longer – in particular to reach the southern end of Grasmere from the north of the neighbourhood via Woodcock Hill. Although acceptable at quieter times, during rush hour residents say it would be a “considerable inconvenience” and cause them “long delays”.
- Montpelier Rise residents are concerned they would see an increase in traffic as a possible new cut through – such a narrow road is particularly unsuitable to accommodate it.

- Residents who drive their children to school would be required to join congested main roads. Carlton Vale East is already busy at school peak hours, and with a school roll of 645 Preston Park Primary has a large catchment. For the parent below, this was a reason not to support the filter:

The inconvenience caused to go all the way round from my weekly shop & to drop children off to various different places before I catch the tube to work.

- People see local services as too far to walk – the collection of shops at Windermere parade and those on Preston Road may not meet all household shopping needs meaning a drive to a large supermarket
- Drivers want to ensure “traffic flow” and removing every obstacle to “efficient” driving:
- E scooters and quad bikes on pavements were reported as a danger in the area

c) Specific reasons the scheme is supported

I support the council's initiative; we must make changes to our behaviour if we are going to stop climate change. I do think that the way it was implemented was heavy handed and people therefore got cross. If it was explained that these measures are part of a wider strategy along with encouraging alternative methods of transport, then I think residents would understand.

- While most people use cars in their daily lives, a significant proportion (55%) believe they can reduce car usage, at least once a week. This seems to acknowledge some of the benefits of a more active life.

I think that the solution has to be a reduction in the number of vehicles. That really requires changes in society's attitude to vehicles, which, unfortunately, is only really likely to happen when congestion gets even worse than it is and will probably stop further worsening rather than cause improvement.



Figure 5 – Streetscape enhancements on Thirlmere Gardens: newly paved footway, grass verges, retained street trees and restored kerbs, with on-street parking.

In addition, while filters may not be seen as the right option, people who cycle want safer routes with support from drivers to see better cycling infrastructure, such as cycle lanes.

Make cycling routes that feel safe for 5 year olds and 80 year olds

- There was support for other measures including school streets and extending the low traffic neighbourhoods to include more streets. In addition, specific changes in certain locations, such as a one way the length of College Road and restrictions on commercial vehicles parking at Windermere roundabout.
- Despite the overall rejection of road closures in the area, 19% wanted a traffic filter in their own street and 31% were prepared to consider it, depending on its location.

We already have traffic reduction measures in place on Grasmere Ave. These have been ignored since day one. Either enforce them or remove them. Removal would free up parking spaces, but enforcement would be better. As stands, have lost 5 traffic spaces with no traffic reduction.

Fig 10 School Street measures on College Road

d) Other issues relating to the implementation of the original scheme

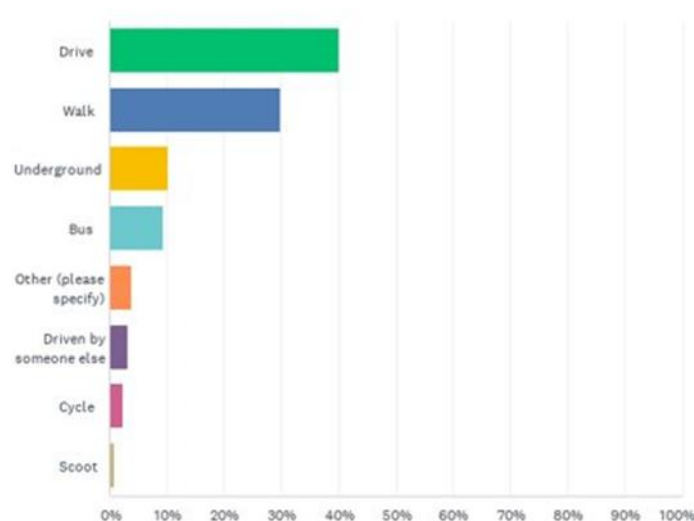
As in other areas, drivers have been confused by the suspended Healthy Neighbourhood signage. Vehicles enter the street unsure whether the cameras are operational and then try to manoeuvre out. Residents want clear, unambiguous information and enforcement to back it up.

The LTN implemented in Preston Park last year was a waste of time and money because there was no enforcement. The signs ("Road closed", "No Through Road") are still up, but they are universally ignored, and always have been.

Specific survey responses

How do you usually travel around the area?

Most people drive in the area (49%) while 29% walk as their usual form of transport. Public transport overall (bus and underground) made up 20% of travel mode.



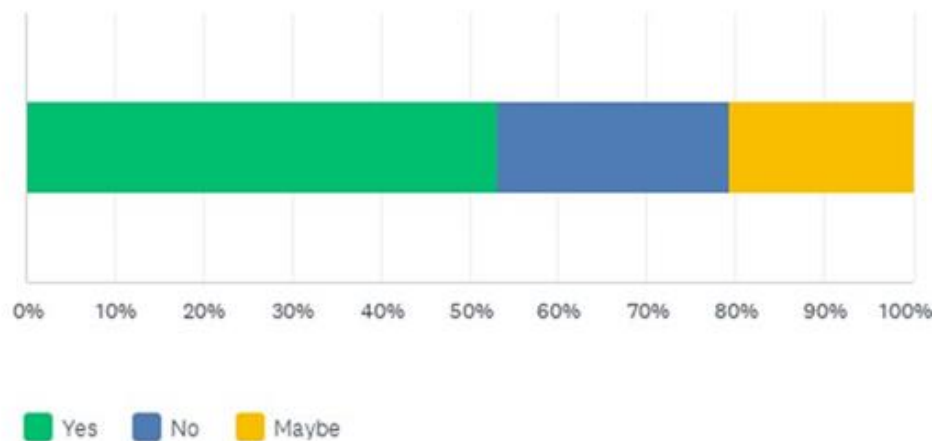
Are you affected by issues caused by motor traffic?

This was fairly evenly divided with 53% saying they were affected, mainly by speeding (46%) or illegal or careless parking (44%), irresponsible driving (40%) or noise (32%). Rat running traffic (29%) and pollution (27%) were also affecting significant numbers of people.

19% said the roads were dangerous for walking and 13% of respondents were afraid to cycle on the road. Heavy lorries and vehicles around the area, causing vibrations to houses as they go over the speed bumps and damaging pavements, as well as event day traffic were highlighted in this section

Do you support the Council taking action to tackle traffic issues?

There was a clear call for action from the Council to address these issues – with yes at 54% and no at 25%. Some were ambivalent about calling for action, unsure if the measures might increase congestion or attract traffic into their street.

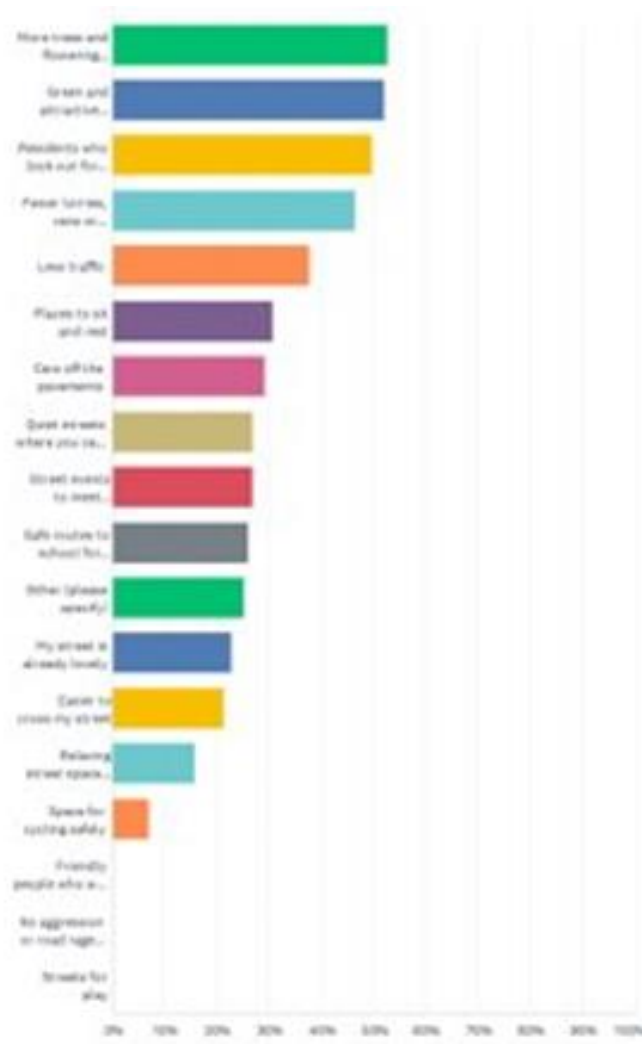


I'm worried this would impact visitors trying to visit me in their cars

It's important to put in place effective traffic measures - and to enforce them - so that pedestrians and cyclists are not endangered. Electric scooters being ridden at high speeds along pavements are also becoming a nuisance

What would make your street lovely?

Greenery, trees and flowering bushes (53%) as well as attractive front gardens (52%) were the most popular request closely followed by residents who look out for each other (51%), suggesting community spirit and neighbourly relations are valued in Preston. Fewer heavy good vehicles and lorries were close behind with 48%, reflecting the problem with commercial vehicles mentioned throughout the engagement



Could you change your driving habits?

55% of respondents were willing to adjust their travel behaviours once a week whilst 37% could not.

Encourage residents to change their habits, only have one car per household, subsidise cycle rental, improve cycle lanes, make some streets cycle only, have regular weekly playstreets, double yellows between driveways so there aren't lots of parked cars.

Do you have a disability that makes walking difficult?

22 people who completed the survey (17%) have a mobility problem affecting their walking and of those 65% wanted to be involved in designing changes to the street whilst 52% were concerned the traffic measures may impact on visiting carers and relatives

Reasons you would not support a “traffic filter”?

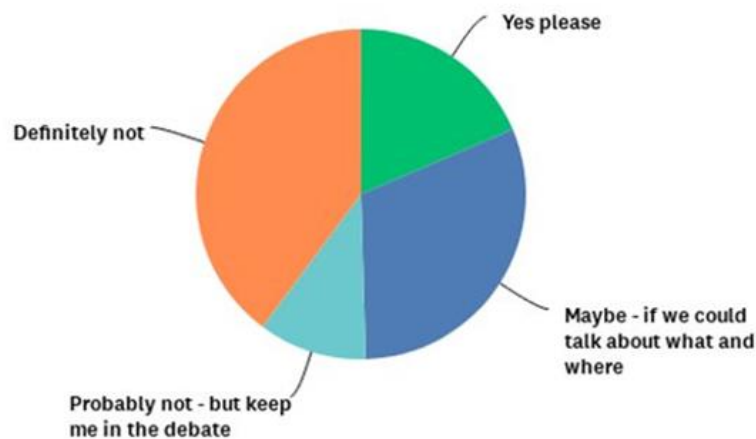
Most people (48%) were concerned the traffic filter would attract more traffic onto their street, reflecting a concern about displacement, possibly from residents in streets neighbouring those with filters. Or a misunderstanding of how the filter would deter traffic.

The responses that followed this top concern all related to drivers unwilling to adjust their driving routes: driving more on busy roads (46%), not wanting the inconvenience (26%) and losing a shortcut (22%) were at the forefront of people’s minds.

When you implemented this scheme last year without consultation, you forced all the traffic from around Preston Park School to come onto Carlton Avenue East. You're choosing to make some streets safer than others and increasing the traffic, pollution, noise, parking etc. on my street, not taking into account my children's health.

Would you consider a traffic filter on your street?

A surprising number of people actually would consider a traffic filter – with 19% saying “yes please” and a further 31% willing to consider it, totalling 56 people. However, there is no doubt the majority are not in favour with 40% saying “no” and a further 11% saying “probably not”, totalling 57 people. Overall, it does suggest there is some interest in the scheme if the design can be right.



Other measures to control traffic

Timed closures around the school street were popular (47%), surprisingly, closely followed by “extend the low traffic neighbourhoods at 26%. Peak hours closure of roads to traffic and protected cycle lanes were also supported.



Figure 11 - Glendale Gardens single planter at the junction with Longfield

Suggestions to reduce traffic, reduce dependency on cars, and improve how the scheme might work

- There is a broad sense among many residents that there is excessive car ownership in the area, and limitations need to be imposed on households purchasing multiple cars. Calls for only one car per household were fairly common.

- Better bicycle infrastructure and education were one of the most prominent themes of the Preston feedback, supported by a wide cross section of the community, especially as a response to the negative impacts of car usage.

South Kenton station should offer better bicycle infrastructure including secure bike storage, bicycle hire and swop car parking for cycle parking.

I would like in-school schemes to teach all children to cycle in reception and year 1, support for families to get the bikes they need, walking buses for all children within a mile of the school, school streets for all children (as idling and antisocial driving and parking is rife outside Byron Court school). Protected cycling routes (not just paint), and good cycle storage/locking options to be much more available. Also, the speed bump/pothole situation makes cycling feel very unsafe.

Cycle lanes, bicycle classes and incentives, safer school streets, increase charges for parking, extended crossings times, seats and resting spots (with flowers, trees etc.), encouraging group cycling (i.e., to schools).

Make alternatives to driving easier and safer to use - especially walking, cycling and public transport. Improve secure cycle storage at local stations/shops as currently they are unsuitable for longer term (e.g., several hours) parking.

- People are passionate about parking – restrict it to residents only, remove commuter parking, redesign parking areas around Windermere shops, enforce school parking. Extend the school street to Carlton Ave East, along Glendale and Longfield

Only residents, school staff and buses can drive up and down Carlton Ave East and the surrounding areas. Get rid of all the school traffic. Make everyone walk to Preston Park Primary School or take the bus. School drop off and pick up times are a disaster.

There is a car park just over the railway line but is always empty – so maybe Brent can work with the school so parents can park in that car park and use it as a park and stride.

- Calls for a safe zebra crossing on Windermere Avenue was made during the walkabout, to connect with the underpass at South Kenton Station. Many children use this route on their way to school each day.

I understand that some raise street crime as an issue, but as someone who has walked for many years both at night and during the day, perhaps the reason is that people feel vulnerable because there is no one else walking.

- The 223 bus to be more frequent and reliable.
- Calls from cyclists to improve Grasmere Avenue, given it is connected to the London Cycling Network - remove potholes, give cyclists priority and remove competing traffic from street.
- Camera controlled traffic measures that would prevent commercial vehicles, lorries and external traffic from cutting through the area, but allow resident access.
- Some residents said they like the planters which narrow the road and slow traffic. But positioning of planters is an issue for some, particularly the ones on Thirlmere.
- The growth in HMOs in this area was also highlighted both during the walkabout and in the survey. These bring additional vehicles into the street and add to parking pressures, as well as reducing the stake of tenants in the local environment.

Not building flats in our once lovely residential streets. Control over landlords renting homes to people who then sublet and have up to 10+ people in a 3 bed property.

Options for modifying the Healthy Neighbourhood

Original design



Figure 12 - Original Preston Healthy Neighbourhood scheme

In the original scheme, through-traffic is prevented from using Grasmere Avenue, Thirlmere Gardens and Glendale Gardens. This not only prevents external traffic from cutting through these streets to avoid a longer route on main roads, but also forces local residents to use those same boundary roads. Potentially, if combined with a willingness to adjust regular car usage (as highlighted in the survey), this inconvenience could encourage residents to seek alternative modes of transport for shorter journeys.

The original scheme has potential to offer a range of benefits for the area in deterring fast commercial traffic, school traffic and commuter traffic from these streets offering quieter and safer routes for those who wish to walk or cycle, and reducing the fears associated with active travel, highlighted in the engagement surveys.

However, the scheme has some negative impacts, notably for residents on Carlton Vale East who fear that traffic will be displaced onto their street. This street is a primary route for through-traffic in the area, including buses, and already faces congestion, especially during rush hours. It is also the nearest accessible location outside the School Street for parent drivers to drop off their children.

In addition, Montpelier Rise residents report that they experienced increased traffic during the short trial period, and this could offer a new cut through for some vehicles. Montpelier Rise along with Glendale and Thirlmere are narrow streets, unsuited for vehicles - especially larger ones, manoeuvring and trying to turn.

Option 1



This alternative scheme takes account of resident concerns about travelling on boundary roads but still retains an element of deterrent for traffic in the form of modal filter at Grasmere Avenue, relocated to lie between Ambleside Gardens and Rydal Gardens.

Retaining the barrier on this long straight road could deter speeding, while the relocation allows most households on the street to get direct access to Preston Road. It would protect the street for residents, allowing safer cycling and walking. The reduced traffic provides a much greater opportunity to invest in improving cycle infrastructure, connecting with Preston Road and Lulworth Avenue / Windermere Avenue roundabout, which also needs safety improvements.

As the closure on Grasmere Avenue could displace through-traffic to Thirlmere Gardens, this scheme retains some protection measures for this street. The modal filter on Thirlmere Gardens is removed and replaced with one-way restrictions on the western arm (between Montpelier Rise and Windermere Avenue) and along Montpelier Rise. The one-way restrictions create a loop of streets with Carlton Avenue East and Windermere Avenue; this allows residents to access their streets

without need to turn around, while restricting through-traffic to one direction only. It will be a feature to monitor and review and the direction of the paired one-way restrictions could be reversed.

Similarly, this scheme removes the closure on Glendale Gardens while making the street one-way and extending the existing one-way on College Road up to the junction with Carlton Avenue East. These restrictions will work as a pair, creating a loop with Longfield Avenue and Carlton Avenue East. This should protect the street from through-traffic heading to/from Longfield Avenue and reduce the complexity of vehicle movements close to the school.

Alongside this, there is also potential to extend the existing School Street along Glendale Gardens to completely remove school traffic. Preston Road car park could be promoted as a “park and stride” location for the school instead of parents parking in local residential streets.

A disadvantage of this scheme is that the area is still permeable for through-traffic, allowing it to use Windermere Avenue and Carlton Avenue East to avoid Preston Road. Residential streets could still be used to avoid parts of Windermere Avenue and Carlton Avenue East at times of particular congestion, but these shortcut routes become less convenient attractive. A trial of this scheme would be worthwhile as this would give accurate data about volumes and any shift in traffic routes.

Conclusions

127 people responded to the surveys, along with a good attendance at the residents meeting (40), on street chats (31) and walkabout (9).

From the results, we can see that generally high levels of residents currently drive in the area (40% of survey respondents) compared to high levels who routinely walk (30%), but a majority are also negatively affected by traffic (53% or 67 respondents), citing speeding, irresponsible driving, noise and rat running as top concerns.

With fair numbers of residents already travelling on foot in the neighbourhood, and 55% of residents willing to reduce their levels of driving each week, there is potential to improve levels of active travel in Preston Area given the right support and encouragement. The poor condition of pavements, the narrow width of pavements and pavement parking were highlighted in the feedback with 29% calling for cars off the pavements.

Factors influencing resident views about a possible traffic filter appear to be dominated by driver perspectives: including 45% expecting to drive more on busy roads, 26% not wanting the inconvenience and 23% losing their own shortcut.

During the **walkabout** it was suggested that the majority of traffic across the area is generated by residents themselves, including parents driving children to school each day and there are a number of comments about the impact of school related traffic.

However, there are **concerns of displaced traffic** caused by the traffic filters and this is the top concern – with 46% worried that the filter may re-route traffic to their street. This is a primary worry for Carlton Avenue East and Montpelier Rise.

In Carlton Avenue East, most people are walking (46%), significantly more than driving (23%) and a huge 85% of respondents are negatively affected by traffic, including speeding, noise, irresponsible driving and rat running. It is here there is anecdotal reports of cars driving along the pavement to

avoid obstacles. They are keen to see less traffic (69%), fewer lorries (69%) and safer routes for walking to school (46%) and crossing the street.

This street is currently used as a main road in the area, but is wholly residential with family size accommodation, on street parking and quite unsuited to heavy volumes of traffic. 90% of residents in Carlton Vale East expect the traffic filters to push more vehicles onto their street and are against it. They report the Preston Park School timed restrictions are already having that effect.

The survey shows that residents of Carlton Vale East would be willing to consider a filter on their street depending on what and where (46%) and 27% want to see it implemented now.

For Montpelier Rise, various forms of timed closure were preferable – for schools (55% want school streets), at peak hours (36%) and extending the low traffic neighbourhood to include Montpelier Rise (27%).

Looking at overall feedback results, many residents do not see reductions in traffic by means of a traffic filter as necessary, and this came through predominantly in the **resident meeting**. For some journeys, filters would mean a significant detour and inconvenience.

During the **Street Chats** we focussed on the Grasmere area to find out if they would support a permanent traffic filter here. 24 respondents were from Grasmere, 5 from Woodford and 2 from Arnside. Of the people we spoke to, the majority (14) either supported the idea of a traffic filter or weren't concerned because they didn't drive.

Measures to address the **school rush hour** were a common theme which indicate that timed measures could be widely supported. Among those who supported the scheme, speeding (including over the speed humps) and "racing track" mentality was their main reason.

8 residents were against the proposal, but one was happy to trial it and another would find timed closures more acceptable.

In addition, 14 residents living on Grasmere responded to the survey and 50% of these supported action. 31% wanted to see the filter introduced with a further 23% saying "maybe", possibly preferring a timed closure. 39% did not want to see a filter introduced.

Across the top 5 streets who responded to the survey, there is a significant measure of support for a traffic filter – higher on Carlton Vale East and College Road, but also qualified support on Thirlmere, depending on where / what type of measure. It maybe that timed measures which reduce peak hours cut through and limit school traffic would be better supported.

However, provision of better cycling infrastructure is necessary to encourage and support residents to make a travel mode shift – 15% of people described cycling as dangerous and 24% want to see protected cycle lanes provided, and better infrastructure for cycling was requested in the survey comments.

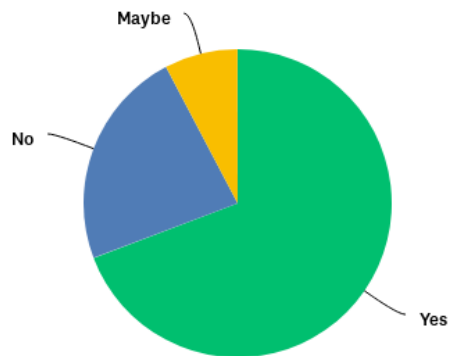
Recommendations

1. Grasmere Avenue closure remains and is focal point for investment in cycling infrastructure.
2. Pedestrian and cycling safety is reviewed at Lulworth / Windermere roundabout , offering safe crossing points, enforcing no vehicle parking on the roundabout arms and looking to convert this stretch to a single lane of traffic controlled by lights, thus enabling safe cycling in both directions.
3. Thirlmere Gardens has a one-way section to junction with Montpelier Rise.
4. Montpelier Rise is one way along the whole length.
5. College Road is fully one way and included in the school street.
6. Glendale Gardens is one way and could be included in a school street extension.
7. Preston Road car park is actively promoted for Park & Stride, supported by a behaviour changes programme (such as WOW).
8. As funding allows, a pedestrian crossing or zebra is established on Windermere Avenue.
9. Enforcement of measures by CCTV to ensure compliance, especially in streets around the schools.

APPENDICES 1

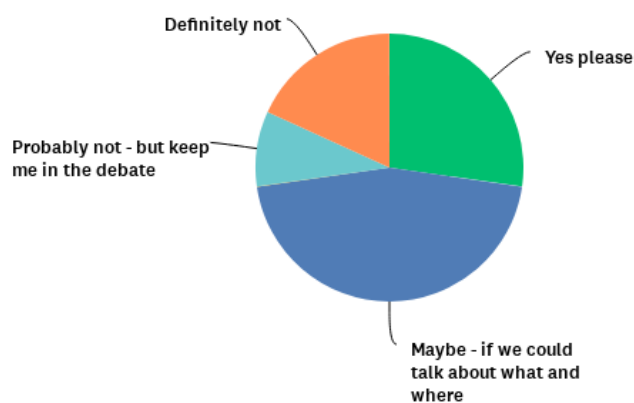
CARLTON AVE EAST

Q7 Do you support the Council taking action to tackle traffic issues?



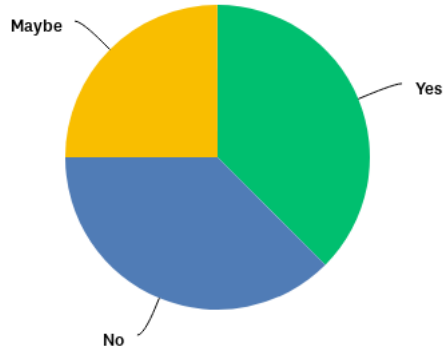
Yes – 69%
No – 23 %
Maybe – 8 %

Q13 If we asked you to consider a traffic filter on your street or nearby, what would you say?



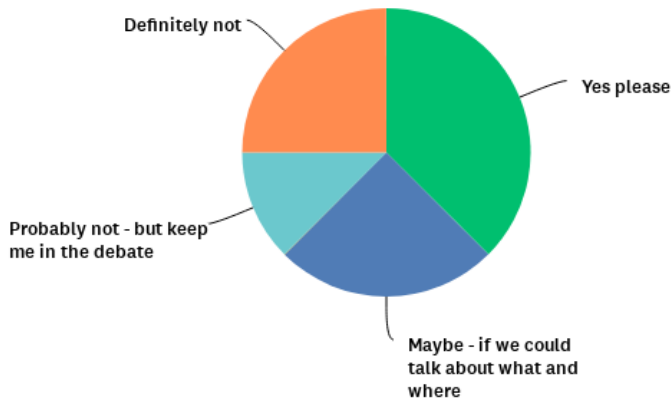
Yes – 27 %
No – 18%
Maybe – 46%
Probably not – 9%

Q7 Do you support the Council taking action to tackle traffic issues?



Yes – 38 %
No –38 %
Maybe – 25%

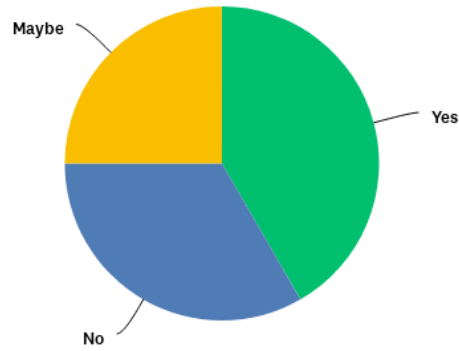
Q13 If we asked you to consider a traffic filter on your street or nearby, what would you say?



Yes – 38 %
No – 25 %
Maybe – 25%
Probably not- 13%

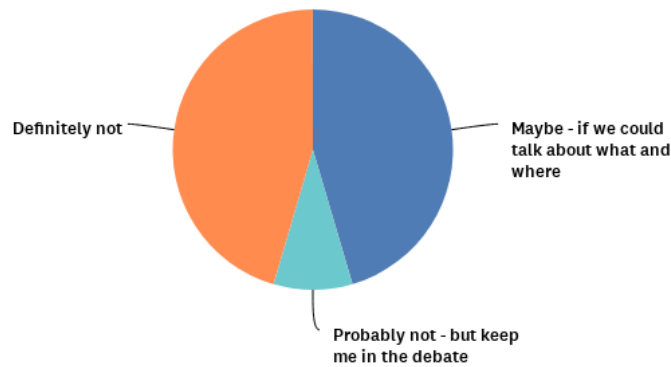
THIRLMERE GARDENS

Q7 Do you support the Council taking action to tackle traffic issues?



Yes – 42%
No – 33%
Maybe – 25 %

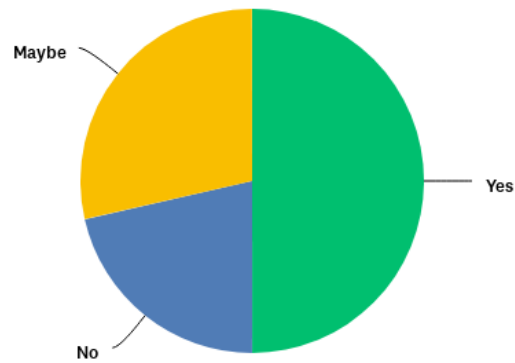
Q13 If we asked you to consider a traffic filter on your street or nearby, what would you say?



No – 46%
Maybe – 46 %
Probably not – 9%

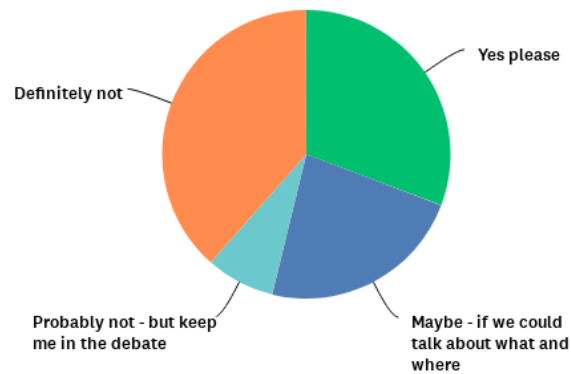
GRASMERE AVENUE

Q7 Do you support the Council taking action to tackle traffic issues?



Yes – 50 %
No – 22%
Maybe – 29%

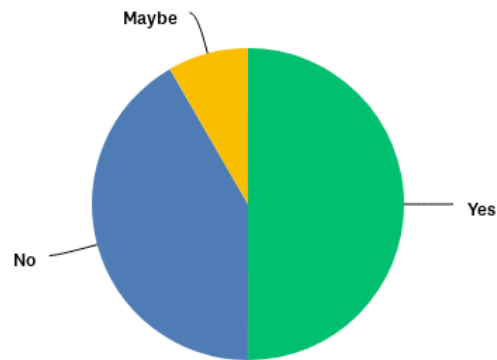
Q13 If we asked you to consider a traffic filter on your street or nearby, what would you say?



Yes – 31%
No – 39%
Maybe – 23 %
Probably not – 8%

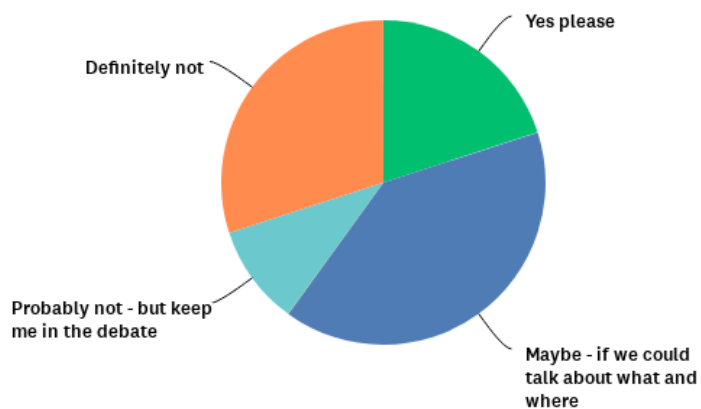
MONTPELIER RISE

Q7 Do you support the Council taking action to tackle traffic issues?



Yes – 50 %
No – 42 %
Maybe – 8 %

Q13 If we asked you to consider a traffic filter on your street or nearby, what would you say?



Yes – 20 %
No – 30 %
Maybe – 40 %
Probably not – 10%