**Widcombe Association Statement on the South Bath Transport Options Public Consultation launched by Curo.**

Curo have launched a city-wide consultation on South Bath Transport options and in particular are asking the citizens of Bath **“In principle, do you support the idea of a cable car for south Bath?”** We would urge all members to look at the information and respond. This is the start of a process that might lead to a cable car in Bath so please take the time to understand the implications and give your views. The details of how you can do this are below.

The cable car would almost entirely be in Widcombe, so we are treating this very seriously. Widcombe is a beautiful and vibrant place to live. It’s a short hop over the river from the City centre and you reach Widcombe Parade full of independent shops, cafes and pubs. It’s where the City meets the countryside full of beautiful buildings leading to green countryside with spectacular views up to the skyline, which provides the setting for our World Heritage City.

We are proud of where we live and we want to make it better so we welcome new ideas that could solve some of our issues like traffic congestion. We have lots of questions but few answers yet on whether a cable car is such an idea?

You will never convince someone whose house may be over flown or overlooked that this is a good idea but lets set that aside for a minute and ask what it means for the wider area and the City as a whole.

In Bath we talk about being “beautifully inventive” drawing inspiration from the radical and bold citizens of the past who made this beautiful unique City what it is today.

So we ask for evidence about whether this scheme can be beautiful. Can the industrial sized architecture, the stations and high masts required for a large cable car the size of a single-decker bus be designed so that it complements and not destroys this special place? Would it create a high quality tourist attraction that would enhance Bath’s reputation as a top destination? Are the finances sound so that is viable and not a white elephant?

Is it inventive? Cable cars are hardly a new idea. What evidence is there that it will significantly contribute to solving Bath’s transport problems? Is it better than the alternatives? Why of all the places in Bath does this go to Mulberry Park? Will it improve congestion in Combe Down and Foxhill or will it be a magnate for yet more traffic, in an area with already busy roads. Will Mulberry Park, Foxhill and Combe Down becoming a transport hub and in effect a fifth Park & Ride as commuters seek to park in residential streets. Will it last the 20-year life expectancy or will it be quickly overtaken by newer technology like electric buses and driverless cars?

We question why Curo, an organisation focussed on affordable housing for rent, are promoting this scheme? Who will gain from a commercial Cable Car, who will take all the risks?

It is clear Curo have made up their minds. Their slick PR machine has designed posters, videos and documents with a single objective in mind to get the citizens of Bath to agree that this is a good idea in principle. Yet so far there is no detail on the cable car proposal.

Before you answer, I would encourage everyone to get involved with this consultation and ask the difficult questions and seek the evidence that this will be good in practice not just in principle. Can it live up to the promises made and can the potential harm to the City and the World Heritage Site be managed and will residents adversely affected be treated fairly?

You have until the 12th May to respond to the public consultation more details on how to do this are at <http://www.southbathtransportoptions.co.uk>

Jeremy Boss, Chair Widcombe Association

**Background information:**

The Widcombe Association is the largest residents association in Bath. It has over 400 households and over 50 businesses as members and has been active for over 35 years. Jeremy Boss is the current Chair and he has lived nearly all his life in Widcombe. The Widcombe Association has yet to formally respond to this consultation and will seek the views of its members and residents before doing so, once they have had an opportunity to see the consultation.

More information from [http://www.widcombeassociation.org.uk/community-matters/south-bath-transport-options/](http://www.widcombeassociation.org.uk/)