

Widcombe Hill Survey – on proposals for a cycling & pedestrian route to the University

4 February 2021

Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete the survey or to contact us. I hope you will view this as an early attempt to start a conversation that we know is likely to take place soon in Bath about active travel routes and Liveable Neighbourhoods. We undertook to publish the results.

Objective

This survey was undertaken to get an early indication, from the immediate residents of Widcombe Hill and its connecting streets, on their views about the prospect of a cycling and pedestrian route to the University using Widcombe Hill.

Summary results

The survey does show consistently high levels of concern about traffic issues on Widcombe Hill. It also shows that a small majority of residents might be willing to consider measures to support a cycling and pedestrian route on Widcombe Hill. There was also a significant minority that supported the status quo or only more limited measures often citing that residents should be the priority. About a fifth of respondents were undecided.

The results of the survey, direct from the survey tool, are attached as file <link>. Questions 9 has not been reported as the question did not give a choice to rank a status quo option and therefore did not fairly represent views.

The results of this survey should be only taken as an early indication of resident's views for the following reasons.

- Because of the pandemic we were unable to delivery paper copies to all the houses in the area. We tried to reach as many people as possible by emailing all Widcombe Association and Macaulay & Prospect Resident Associations' members. We also emailed the street coordinators set up for the pandemic asking them to distribute the link to their streets. Recipients were also asked to share with their neighbours. We don't know how many of the households in the area were reached.
- We had 167 responses (165 online and two by paper forms). This is approximately 30% of the catchment number of households.
- There is very limited information on the likely scope, format and timing of any specific measures. No detailed proposals have been bought forward by Bathnes (Bath & North East Somerset Council) at this stage. Therefore, many residents may have felt unable to determine their opinion at this stage.
- We only surveyed residents in the immediate area. Any proposals would also be of interest to a much wider group in Widcombe, North Road, Claverton and Bathwick and beyond.
- This is not a formal consultation. This would be undertaken by Bathnes if any proposals are to be bought forward.

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Many respondents took the time and effort to make freeform comments in answers to questions 10 and 11. We have not published these in full as it may be possible to identify individual households. So, we don't lose these comments the table below shows the areas in which people commented.

Area of suggestion	Number of comments
Don't support change, prefer status quo, over reaction, overweighted against resident's interests.	54
Suggestion of traffic calming measures rather than any form of closure or partial closure.	30
Concerns about access to homes by residents, many suggest allowing residents cars through any bus gate.	29
Concerns about traffic displaced onto other roads, higher carbon footprint for resident journeys, impact of CAZ.	28
Speed enforcement, reduced speed limits	24
Concerns about use of hill for cyclists, speeding, cyclist visibility, hill inherently dangerous for cyclists. Concerns on faster unsafe cycling if dedicated.	23
Reduce uncontrolled parking, e.g., above Crowe Hall and at the top and bottom of the hills so road is not narrowed.	18
Concerns on impact on Church Street and Copseland in particular caused as residents use as rat runs. Note that access only not enforced in Church Street.	16
Concerns that existing bus service should continue but that the hill is inappropriate for any more buses or coaches and should have a weight limit.	15
Introduction of a one-way system for vehicles (probably upwards), peak time restrictions, Sunday trial or other trial period.	13
Improvements required to footpaths, pavements, cleaning and exit of skyline footpath	9

Use of the results

This survey was facilitated by the Widcombe Association, including the use of email database to send to members who live in the survey area. The results will be shared with respondents and local ward councillors and will be considered as part of the evidence (understanding its limitations) by the WA Committee / Macauley and Prospect RA if, or when, any proposals are brought forward in relation to Widcombe Hill or the surrounding area.