

Response by Bristol Walking Alliance to the A4 Bristol to Bath Corridor Improvements Consultation



Bristol Walking Alliance would like to make the following points in connection with the consultation on what measures should be taken to improve the Bristol section of the A4 Bristol to Bath Corridor.

We have responded to some of the specific questions posed in the online consultation and make some general points that are relevant to this and other bus corridors.

Response to walking questions from the online consultation

Based on the questionnaire categories, we would highlight the following areas that need the most improvement:

- Cleaner air / less pollution
- More crossing points
- Wider pavements
- Pavements separated from motorised traffic and bikes
- Less traffic on the route
- Safer crossings and junctions
- More green spaces and trees
- Better signage indicating footpaths and direction / mileage
- Better connections to green spaces / leisure spaces

We strongly advocate that the Healthy Streets Indicators should be applied to this route. Indeed we support Healthy Streets being used generally on transport schemes as a design tool, and to test people's perceptions of the before/after improvement.

Comments that apply to this and other bus routes

Pedestrian improvements

Bus routes are also important routes for pedestrians, especially in the city centre and the inner suburbs.

In some places, the width of the footway is inadequate for the number of pedestrians.

- Pavement width should be proportionate to the numbers of pedestrians using it.
- Pavements should not be shared with cycles (e.g. between Bath Bridge and Three Lamps junction).

In some places, there is insufficient space to allow for both those waiting for a bus and for those passing by.

- Pavements should be wider at bus stops (e.g. Tramway Road inbound stop).

Progress along the route for pedestrians is often hampered by the number of side junctions where it is difficult or dangerous to cross.

- Wide side junctions should be narrowed to reduce turning traffic speed (e.g. Kensington Park Road, Talbot Road, Church Hill, Angers Road).
- Continuous footways should be provided across side junctions (e.g. along Sandy Park Road, Angers Road).
- Where alternative access is possible, side junctions should be closed to motor traffic to contribute to Liveable Neighbourhoods (e.g. at Three Lamps Estate).

Crossing busy roads along the route can be difficult for pedestrians.

- The existing concrete pedestrian bridge over Bath Road at Brislington Hill creates an unnecessarily long detour for pedestrians trying to cross to the shops, but there are no nearby surface-level crossing points. The bridge should be replaced by a wide surface-level pedestrian-controlled crossing.
- Where there are lights-controlled junctions, explicit pedestrian crossing points should be provided on the branches (e.g. across Bath Road at junction with Flowers Hill).
- Lights sequences should give adequate pedestrian crossing time.
- All standalone lights-controlled pedestrian crossings should be upgraded to Puffin crossings with pedestrian-responsive timing.
- New crossings should be introduced where there are long stretches without any crossings (e.g. along Sandy Park Road, between Three Lamps and Totterdown Bridge).
- Whenever possible single-stage crossings should be used rather than multi-stage (e.g. across Bath Road at the junction with Totterdown Bridge, where children living in the new development will be encouraged to cross Bath Road to the nearest park; across Sandy Park Road at the junction with Bath Road; across Bath Road at the junction with Sandy Park Road to reach Arno's Court Park).

For the elderly and the frail it can be important when walking to local facilities that there is the opportunity to rest.

- Seating should be provided, preferably away from the road, on well-used pedestrian routes to shops and bus stops.

In addition, for some pedestrians, lack of access to public toilets prevents them venturing out.

- Public toilets, or public access to toilets in business premises, should be available and signposted across the city centre and in all local centres.

Local shopping facilities, such as those along Sandy Park Road and at Brislington Hill, are important for encouraging people to walk and cycle rather than adding to the amount of motor traffic.

- The shopping area at Brislington Hill needs to be made more attractive by introducing more greenery and vertical barriers to the noise and pollution from Bath Road.

- If possible, without impeding buses, the excessive amount of space taken up by the road layout at Brislington Hill should be reallocated to improve the area for people.

Bus improvements

Many pedestrians are also users of public transport. To increase the use of public transport it is essential that buses run regularly and reliably. Congestion on the roads, particularly at peak hours, is the biggest barrier to reliability. There are several places along this route where bus lanes are missing (e.g. Bristol Hill inbound) or are inadequate because of limited hours of operation and lack of enforcement

We advocate the following measures wherever congestion is an issue along the route:

- Bus lanes should be provided along busy roads and leading up to busy junctions.
- Buses should be given priority at junctions.
- Bus lanes should be 24-hour or at least have extended hours of operation (7am-10am, 3pm-7pm).
- Bus lanes should be enforced by CCTV.

Regularity of service is important, along with making any waiting times known and comfortable:

- All bus stops should have bus information displays.
- Reliability of information displays should be improved.
- All bus stops should have shelters and seats.

It is important for those who are less agile that bus stops are conveniently placed for transport connections and for access to retail and leisure areas:

- Distances from bus stops to railway and bus stations and to retail and leisure facilities should be kept well within the maximum guideline of 400m, and preferably less than 100m.
- The distance between the last bus stop in Totterdown and the next at Temple Meads should be examined and improved.

In the city centre, connections to other main bus routes need to be well defined and easy to use.

- Bus stops that provide transfer points to other bus routes should be sited close together, should not involve crossing busy roads, and should offer enhanced waiting facilities.

Bristol Walking Alliance

10 September 2021

enquiries@bristolwalkingalliance.org.uk