



**The Bear Flat
Association**

for those living and working in Bear Flat, Bath



MOVEMENT STRATEGY

BFA Response

**Bear Flat Association (BFA) submission on the
B&NES Movement Strategy for Bath Document**

November 2025



1 Relationships to other strategies

We welcome the attention B&NES is paying to transport, a topic of widespread concern in the community, and there is much to support in the current document.

However, it is unclear how the Movement Strategy relates to relevant Council strategies, policies and initiatives. Figure 1 on Policy Alignment does not mention the emerging Local Plan or the recent B&NES Active Travel Masterplan (Consultation, July 2024).

No doubt there is joined up thinking on transport with housing across B&NES, but it does not show clearly in this strategy. BFA's major comment on the Local Plan options has been the movement implications for the A367 and elsewhere of the likely increased housing to the south of the city.

The current Somer Valley Links programme gets only a passing reference, with the document missing how SVL might impact bus services on the A367 – potentially quicker, more frequent buses.

2 Ambition and effectiveness

The Corporate Strategy aims to 'lead the UK in climate and nature action'. But this UK-wide aspiration is not reflected in the Movement Strategy that has more prosaic aims such as to 'reduce vehicle traffic volumes'. The Movement Strategy should be bolder and more ambitious in its vision and goals.

Curiously, the table of contents announces a Chapter 4 on 'The vision and goal' but in the event Chapter 4 is 'Understanding the issues and causes'. The original intention should be pursued, and more made of the Council's corporate ambition.

The Movement Strategy gives many admirable measures but is vague about implementation. The levers in particular are explained at high level and lack a set of more detailed steps on each, while the timeline offers nothing more precise than 'Short / Medium Term' or similar. The document is well intentioned, but suggests little that is new, and lacks a detailed and convincing programme of action.



3 Quality spaces

The emphasis in the document on creating great quality places is excellent. A strategy of this kind might have focussed on movement only in terms of getting from A to B. This Movement Strategy avoids that pitfall.

We support the intention that movement measures can be place-shaping opportunities for our communities to thrive, especially greener streets and more people-friendly places.

4 City centre

The document is disappointing in its emphasis on a 'historic core'. This is at odds with the delineation of the Bath Conservation Area and the two WHSs across the city, all of which acknowledge the fact that there is significant heritage outside the so-called core.

Protection should extend beyond the core. Areas such as Lansdown, Bathwick, Widcombe and Bear Flat share the issues of the city centre in having historic streets and buildings with heavy traffic. The A367 is congested through the Bear Flat and will become increasingly so as a consequence of development currently being proposed in North East Somerset. Bear Flat is in the WHS and Conservation Area, has a listed terrace fronting the highway, is designated as a Local Centre in the Local Plan, yet seems a low priority in the Movement Strategy.

5 City centre car parks

We support FoBRA in regard to parking as a lever. Traffic is unlikely to diminish or even be stabilised on radial roads such as the A367 while people know they can park easily in the city centre. The document lacks effective action to reduce parking capacity in the core or to prioritise use of Park & Ride over city car parks. As FoBRA says, the default assumption should be that car journeys into Bath end at a park & ride site unless there is an exceptional reason for having to drive into the city (or their route lacks P&R).

Lever #8 talks of 'managing car parking in the city more effectively' but falls short of grasping the nettle of reducing capacity.



6 20 mph limits

BFA considers that a 20mph limit is just as desirable outside the core as within it. We have campaigned for such a limit on the A367 through and beyond our Local Centre, but without success so far. The SVL proposals earlier this year resisted the idea, but we find this hard to accept, especially when such limits are already applied on London Road and Upper Bristol Road. We feel strongly that Lever #1 needs to be widened.

As the introduction of a 20-mph limit becomes – gradually – less novel and more routine, the case for consistency gathers strength. For locals and visitors alike, it is currently hard to follow the differing speeds allowed. A wider and more consistent area for 20mph, consistently signed, would help everyone.

7 School travel

The section on schools stresses school travel plans as a measure but without evidence this has proved effective hitherto. STPs too often are worthy words, not concrete steps to achieve modal shift.

BFA's experience with Beechen Cliff School bears this out. We have encouraged and chivvied the School over many years, but with little outcome, even though an STP is the subject of a planning condition.

Lever #15 is not convincing so far.

8 Business travel

We support Lever #14. Action need not wait till the medium term – some changes could be realised short term, if not within a year. Travel plans are an obvious mechanism but can be cumbersome and time-consuming. Simpler, complementary measures can be run alongside. Travel information, for instance. The RUH draws considerable traffic across the city via the A367 and other routes: some of these journeys must be by car for medical or logistical reasons, but many could be made in other ways. The RUH, however, in their appointment messages routinely give car parking information, without mention of the many bus services that operate (and stop nearer the entrance than the car parks).



9 ebikes and scooters

The strategy mentions the hilly terrain as a deterrent to cycle use, but this factor is diminishing with the growing popularity of power assistance. BFA sees many ebikes and scooters in use on one of the steepest routes from the centre, Holloway. There are often clumps of parked scooters at the Wells Road/Oldfield junction and on the pavement opposite Tesco at the junction of Wellsway and Entry Hill.

There is also concern about the rising number of accidents involving them. The Movement Strategy should explicitly address how to promote safe use.

10 Car clubs

Some car clubs operate already in Bath – there is a dedicated car club parking space on Holloway close to Bear Flat. More could be done to promote car clubs and similar initiatives. True, they do not mean modal shift, but they do encourage users to use active travel more, and reduce the demand for parking,

11 Safety at night

The Council is seeking to expand P&R hours, and this is welcomed. More could be done to improve safety in hours of darkness on some active travel routes that are unlit or poorly lit. The Two Tunnels route would be better used if it was lit (we acknowledge it also has a role as a dark corridor for wildlife and careful design would be required).

Bear Flat Association (BFA)

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