

# Reading Transport Commission: Evidence from Individuals

Evidence to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2008

## Analysis completed

The first **270** submissions to the Transport Commission were analysed in an *interim* report released on 17 January 2008. In the event, this proved to be almost exactly 50% of the eventual **541** responses received by the close of our public consultation on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2008. Whilst new evidence received has not changed the overall shape of this analysis in any significant way, it has given us new *insights* into a number of contentious issues.

All submissions are being posted on the website in the order in which they were received and a *submission number* is given for each quotation used in this report.

Once again responses came primarily from across the *Greater Reading area* (see map), with two thirds coming from within the borough boundaries. The overwhelming majority were from *private individuals* and it is *these* responses that are analysed here.

Responses from *neighbouring* authorities, *regional* organisations, *businesses* and *business organisations*, political *parties*, and *voluntary* and *community* groups who have been invited to give evidence at our public hearings are also posted on the website by hearing date, following each session, with a *summary* of key points raised at the hearing.

We are inviting a *small number* of individuals who have submitted evidence to discuss their views with us at two public hearings on **26 February** and **4 March**. It is already clear, however, that there are some key issues that *annoy* people about the way the transport system works and there are some strongly held, and often *conflicting*, views about how Reading's transport issues could be *solved*. The Commission has therefore highlighted some of the *recurring themes* from the public evidence and has used them to prepare a number of key *challenges* on behalf of the many people who have written to us.

We will examine these challenges with the Council's officers at evidence sessions to be held on Wednesday **12 March** and on Wednesday **19 March**, both meetings to be held in public at 2.00 pm in the Council Chamber at the Civic Offices.

## The public's view: what causes Reading's traffic problems?

### Pinch points

In some cases work undertaken by the Council is felt to have had an adverse effect on traffic flow.

Rose Kiln Lane: The decision to replace the Rose Kiln Lane roundabout by traffic lights is disliked by all respondents who mention this particular traffic scheme.

- Why was this undertaken?
- Does the Council accept that this has added to traffic congestion in the area?
- Can it be reversed? What can be done to alleviate current levels of congestion?

London Road - The system of three lanes becoming two is extremely unpopular.

- Can it be changed? What can be done to prevent the Eldon Road and Sidmouth Street junctions holding up the traffic?

Oxford Road: The decision to get rid of bus lay-bys for the Premier route buses is disliked. It is felt that this has increased congestion, with stationary buses in the road holding up the traffic.

- Is it possible to reinstate lay-bys in this area?

Oracle car park: Can anything be done to prevent this causing major traffic congestion, especially at weekends? Public suggestions include:

- More/ better ticket barriers
- An entrance from the flyover

### School run

There is a perception that traffic is very much exacerbated by the school run.

- What is the evidence of traffic levels in and out of term time?
- What is being done to encourage alternatives to parents driving their children to school?

### Traffic lights

The public believe that there are too many traffic lights, especially on through routes, and that these are badly phased.

- Why are there so many traffic lights on through routes, the IDR apparently has 15 sets, as this currently causes traffic to stop and start constantly.

- Why are the traffic lights on major through routes not linked to allow traffic to go through several junctions on green?
- Does Reading use up-to-date traffic light technology e.g. SCOOT/ FloLine/ CLMAT?

### **Bus Lanes**

The public either thinks that there are too many bus lanes, and they cause congestion, or that there are too few bus lanes, and that this makes the buses unreliable. Apart from this fundamental difference of opinion, there are also a variety of views about who should be allowed to use bus lanes.

- Why are the following not allowed to use bus lanes:
  - Police cars and ambulances, except when on emergency calls?
  - Private hire cars (as opposed to taxis, which can use bus lanes)?
  - All buses (i.e. all school buses, the Heathrow and other coaches)?
- Why are most bus lanes in operation for 24 hours a day, rather than just in rush hour?

### **Cycle Routes**

- What is the council's policy on priority for cyclists?
- Why is there no cycle route through the town centre?
- What is being done to improve the security of cycle parks in the town centre?

### **Pedestrians**

- Pedestrian crossings - especially on the IDR - are complicated and slow. Can this be improved safely?
- Why are there so many split pedestrian crossings with traffic islands in the middle of the road?

### **Road Signs**

- Is there a signing strategy for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians across the town?

### **Enforcement**

- How do the Council and/or police enforce compliant behaviour in box junctions, bus lanes and pedestrian areas?

## The Public's View: How to Solve Reading's Traffic Problems

### Third Thames Bridge

The Third Thames Bridge is part of the Council's Transport Plan.

- What is the likelihood of it being built, bearing in mind the opposition of Oxfordshire County Council?
- How soon could it be operational assuming its construction were agreed in 2008?
- What would be the impact on traffic flows in Caversham? Would a Caversham bypass be needed?
- What effect would it have on other crossings of the Thames and on traffic in and around the town centre?

### Cross Town Route (CTR)

This plan was abandoned in the 1980s, but remains popular with some of the public.

- What would be the impact on traffic flows of a CTR from Vastern Road to the A329M roundabout?
- Would the alternative CTR, south of the railway lines, be feasible?
- Is a public transport only/park and ride route on either line feasible?

### Park & Ride

Reading is currently poorly provided with Park & Ride facilities, despite strong public support for the concept.

- What is stopping the Council building Park & Ride facilities to the north and the east of Reading?

### Public Transport

Whilst there are strongly expressed views about improving conditions for the private motorist, on balance the majority of respondents feel that improved public transport should be a key factor in Reading's transport plans.

- Does RBC agree with Reading Transport's analysis of pinch points on bus routes?
- What, if any, action is planned?

### Congestion Charge

- Would it be feasible to introduce a congestion charge or road pricing scheme, perhaps for through traffic, with resident exemptions?

### Weight Restriction on Lorries

- Would it be feasible to introduce weight restrictions on lorries to deter them from using Reading as a through route?

## IDR

One clear theme from analysis of the public evidence is that the IDR is not seen as the cause of Reading's traffic problems, but rather a series of traffic pinch points and bottlenecks that prevent traffic leaving it.

- Why was the one-way IDR put forward as a priority rather than other engineering schemes such as the third Thames Bridge, or more Park & Ride facilities?
- Why was the proposal for an anti-clockwise traffic movement?
- The one-way system proposed to reduce the IDR from 4 lanes to 3. Why was this thought (contrary to most public opinion) to increase capacity and reduce congestion?

## What is the impact of Reading's traffic problems now?

Of the 541 submissions received, all but a handful paint a picture of a town with *serious* traffic problems that are getting *worse*. Reading's traffic is also felt to be particularly *unpredictable*.

*"The car park that is Reading's main roads slows down any travel I attempt from 0730-1030 and 1500-1900 weekdays and any time after 12 noon at weekends." (253)*

*"I travel to work (part time) by car... initially three years ago I could leave the house in Emmer Green at 9.20... I now need to leave... at 9.00 to ensure I arrive in the Oxford Road at the right time. There is the impact of the rush hour now being longer." (439)*

*"The journey between my office and the Swallowfield bypass is very predictable, but at the Reading end it seems anything can happen, particularly in the evenings." (296)*

A small number of respondents disagree, or perhaps feel that Reading's traffic problems have been *overstated*, but they are very much in the minority.

*"Of course, like any road in the UK there are traffic tailbacks during rush hours, usually 0815-0900 and 1715-1815. I travel to the town centre almost daily by car outside these narrow time slots and do NOT have a problem" (53)*

However, the overwhelming picture is *gloomy*.

*"If I didn't live in Reading and know all the good things about it, my first impressions would be that it's awful. The roads are too narrow, so there are continual traffic jams and the gateways to Reading are unusually unattractive and run down." (523)*

*"The whole of Reading is a traffic nightmare. The air pollution, congestion and safety aspects would deter all but the brave to venture forth on a journey through the town." (381)*

*"I consider the volume of Reading traffic has a major impact in air pollution from exhaust fumes, noise from the large number of engines/exhausts, the physical dangers in trying to cross roads, and the amount of roadside parking. The latter in the suburbs is in many places destroying the grass verges ... making them a rutted quagmire." (409)*

Many respondents speak about the affect on *air quality*.

*"There are several Air Quality Management Areas in Reading (for nitrogen dioxide) and the town does have a reputation as one of the most polluted in the country." (296)*

*"The town is in a valley so the pollution level is high primarily because of road usage. The pollution is further increased because traffic crawls through the town several hours each day... Any increase in traffic volume will impact on the pollution level assuming petrol/diesel is still the major fuel source for transport generally." (441)*

**Cemetery Junction** is seen as having a particular problem with pollution, along with other recognised traffic pinch points such as the *Oxford Road, Queen's Road/London Road* and *Caversham*.

*"Cemetery Junction...has recently been recorded as one of the most polluted junctions in the country..." (260)*

*"The traffic creates bad pollution, especially at Cemetery Junction, where the pollution can often be smelt in the morning" (305)*

*"Massive pollution. The media rates Reading poorly on that score and you can smell the fumes as you walk down Grovelands Road/Oxford Road." (330)*

*"Some roads suffer from so much pollution - e.g. the Caversham Road -that they are unpleasant to walk along and must be appalling for the residents." (383)*

*"I suspect the worst affected areas are Queens Road/London Road and the IDR underpasses, but many other areas - in particular Caversham - are often gridlocked and must experience high pollution at times." (296)*

This in turn affects people's **health**.

*"Air pollution does not add to a healthy and safe environment as well I know being the parent of a chronic asthmatic, whom can become very restricted with breathing once trapped in traffic jams and belching fumes of which we are familiar with when trying to get around Reading". (85)*

*"Friends with asthmatic children have moved out of Reading completely to improve the health of their families only to find that the traffic/air pollution problem has followed them. One couple we know have now moved to Somerset to find 'clean air'." (424)*

*"Since my arrival in Reading in 2005 I regularly have sore throats, coughs and colds while previously, while living in other areas of the UK, I had not suffered to such an extent." (259)*

The effect on Reading's **ecology** and its **historic buildings** is also seen as grim.

*"From a wildlife perspective, it's like any large town - wildlife keeps clear or dies..." (253)*

*"The influx of vehicles into Reading has to increase fumes and fume by-products which have a negative effect on the...historical buildings in the town..." (422)*

**Noise** is another major irritant.

*"I live just off the M4 at junction 11 and ... noise levels from traffic have increased. When I moved to the area 33 years ago, it was much quieter but now traffic here in the south of Reading along the A33 is something of a nightmare and becomes worse when there is a football match" (85)*

*"Even in the quiet parts of Reading (the Kennet Valley for example) the sound of vehicle travel is intrusive (87)*

*"Now, having lived in central Reading for three years, I do confirm the highly negative impact of the IDR on residents... the noise generated by traffic (and also the very poor quality of asphalt) is unbearable (even with double glaze windows I can tell you..." (134)*

It is felt that there will be an increased risk of **road accidents** and a negative impact on **road conditions**.

*"...has anyone looked into how many accidents have been caused due to a reckless action taken by a frustrated driver who has taken 20 minutes to travel 1 mile." (413)*

*"Then there is the constant wear and tear by the amount of vehicles being driven on existing roads." (404)*

## What impact will increases in traffic over the next 10-15 years have on the economy and environment?

Some people actively *welcome* the future development of Reading.

*"If Reading is to grow, it needs trade and business and shoppers. Those in charge should recognise it is their duty to serve these customers not the other way around... Residents are important but the town does not grow on residents alone... It has to receive visitors and they will come by car... (81)*

*"New businesses are key to the prosperity of the town." (51)*

Whilst others believe firmly that *development* must be *stopped* forthwith...

*"Who says that traffic will increase over the next 10-15 years? RBC will kill Reading. Reading should be satisfied with being a town and not a city. RBC must stop increasing the size of the town and the number of people that want to get around. THIS TOWN IS FULL AND HAS REACHED ITS MAXIMUM SUSTAINABILITY... RBC must get real about the term sustainability - there is no such thing as perpetual sustainable growth. Reading has in mind achieving a massive population growth. This should be debated before the traffic issue. (7)*

... or at least that it should be better *controlled*.

*"Limit the development of new houses and this will impact on traffic volumes" (8)*

There is particular concern about certain key developments ; for example the redevelopment of the *Battle Hospital* site for housing and a new supermarket (*Tesco*), is singled out as a specific worry by around two dozen respondents.

*"Stop development such as the Battle Hospital Tesco, which cannot fail to do other than increase traffic flow into Reading from west of the town." (274)*

*"Allowing the construction of large supermarkets in congested areas of town (Oxford Road) is a folly. Their large lorries congest roads and slow traffic flow." (166)*

Other concerns include the Prudential's proposal to build 7500 homes in the *Kenney Valley* south of the M4.

*"With the Prudential hoping to build 7500 homes in the Kennet Valley and the proposal to build 42,000 homes in West Berkshire the situation is not going to improve." (211)*

Most respondents regard development as *inevitable*, with *increased* traffic over an *unavoidable* by-product of continued economic growth over the next 10-15 years unless something radical is done to control it.

*"As the roads are already full now at peak times, this can only get worse with the proposed building of so many new homes in the Reading and surrounding areas. The building of many more houses will increase the population of people and vehicles. This will then lead to more roads being needed... "*

*As there will be more vehicles per head of population more parking will be needed and the combination of road and house building plus parking will use up more and more green space... (444)*

Many foresee *dire* consequences for Reading and its economy.

*"I think our children will grow up with an increased awareness of the true cost of the attitude which has prevailed since the 1970s that we all have an inalienable right to drive our private motor cars wherever we want to, as fast as we want to without any consideration for the environment we're destroying. (I'm talking about the quality of life in Reading and not saving polar bears from melting ice caps but they would also benefit if there were less cars in traffic jams.)"* (520)

*"I truly believe that companies will move out of Reading. The amount of lost hours for companies due to traffic jams, accidents, unsuitable public transport will be considerable. Consideration should also be given to the difficulty companies face attracting the right staff because of this reason."* (45)

*"(Traffic will) turn the city centre into a permanent car park."* (283)

*"Many neighbouring authorities already have better road networks and transport links. Why base your business in Reading when you can go to Swindon? One of the major selling points of Reading has been communications. The developments for Central Reading will be empty office space unless investment in the infrastructure is made"* (521)

*"Reading has the opportunity to become a real economic powerhouse in the South East. I feel that we are at the point where unless more thought is put into the transport of workers then employers will have no choice but to relocate to destinations where they can attract the sort of employees that typically would not use public transport."* (328)

However, not everyone takes this stance and some respondents suggest that through *traffic management* and technological developments (*green fuel* options etc), the negative effects of development can be mitigated.

*"I'd like to see Reading disprove the theory that economic growth always equals increased traffic"* (22)

*"I'm concerned that your question assumes that traffic will increase - is there no intention to control or even reduce traffic?"* (332)

*"Probably not a lot of impact to the environment especially if people were encouraged to use LPG it coverts dangerous Methane / Propane gas into less harmful CO2 and water."* (430)

## What causes Reading's traffic problems?

### An Old Town

A number of respondents specifically blame Reading's problems on its being an old town with a poor *road infrastructure*, without necessarily absolving traffic planners from all blame.

*"Reading is an old town with its routes and junctions never designed to take the levels of traffic we suffer from. However, it is totally manageable..."* (23)

*"Reading has one fundamental problem - its history as a small market town, all of whose road arteries have been - and still are - single carriageways."* (295)

*"Reading has grown from a small town with a Thames crossing with main radial routes and no sensible alternative routes avoiding the town centre apart from the M4."* (218)

*"The Reading economy demands extra traffic and transport coming in. It is only natural when a town is successful it will attract additional transportation issues. The only new road that has been built since the IDR was the new A33 relief road... The population has mushroomed and Reading Borough Council expect the same road system to be used by an ever increasing population." (281)*

*"All traffic comes in on just five main roads..." (411)*

### Ring Road/ North- South route

A further issue is the lack of a *ring road* or an adequate *North-South* route.

*"Reading is one of the few towns without a ring road or, at very least, a North-South bypass. Reading has a perfectly good East-West bypass, the M4. Please study the map of the whole area and it is abundantly clear that Reading cannot continue to avoid action to stop North South traffic entering the town." (123)*

The impact of this is to bring traffic *through* the town unnecessarily.

*"A very large proportion of the motorists passing through the town have no desire to be there - they simply have no alternative routes." (196)*

### The IDR

When respondents discuss the cause of Reading's traffic problems, the *IDR* is rarely seen as a problem in itself (with the exception of the Oracle flyover).

*"The IDR itself is not the problem, rather the lack of a joined-up transport policy for Reading and the surrounding region" (192)*

*"The IDR plan was flawed because it did not address one of the root causes of the transport problems, which is a set of bottlenecks that prevents traffic leaving the IDR... No amount of tinkering with the IDR will address these issues." (441)*

However the *IDR* is also *not* loved.

*" This huge cut of concrete all around the town makes it unattractive, the noise generated by the traffic (and also the very poor asphalt) is unbearable..., the high density traffic surely generates huge amounts of atmospheric pollutants, the severing effect already mentioned also impacts other sustainable ways of transportation (walking and cycling)." (135)*

*"The existing IDR is a physical, visual and psychological barrier. For those of us living near but outside the centre, it greatly reduces the attraction of a walk into the town. For shoppers in the centre, it cuts them off from areas (notably London Street and Oxford Road) which might otherwise have provided secondary shopping..." (234)*

*"The IDR is a grimy unattractive barrier to physical activity..." (414)*

### Pinch points

Around one in four respondents mention specific traffic *pinch points* on arterial roads leading away from the IDR that they feel lead to traffic hold-ups in Reading.

*"The town of Reading is riddled with individual points of congestion and hold-ups that overall make for a tortuous journey by car, and even by bus or bicycle." (23)*

Regularly identified as *problematic* are the following:

### ***Caversham (North)***

Caversham, to the North of the Thames, is thought to have a number of pinch points, mainly caused by traffic lights, though the main issue is bottlenecks caused by the limitations of the two bridges over the Thames.

*“There are three notorious pinch points in Caversham:*

- *Gosbrook Road/ George Street traffic lights*
- *Prince of Wales traffic lights in Prospect Street*
- *Church Street/ Bridge Street traffic lights “ (16)*

*“The bridge over the Thames at the end of Richfield Avenue (Caversham Bridge). It is not the bridge that has the capacity issues, but the capacity of the junction at the north end of the bridge and beyond.” (21)*

### ***Sutton’s Seeds Roundabout/ Cemetery Junction***

A number of respondents claim that traffic congestion leaving Reading in the morning towards the A329M is the worst in Reading.

*“The main (morning and evening) bottlenecks are traffic trying to leave town to the East at Sutton seeds roundabout ... I believe we should concede that the 3<sup>rd</sup> bridge from the end of the A3290 will not be built as a public-use bridge. Therefore the Sutton’s (TVP) flyover should come down. In its place a remodelled junction could allow almost continuous flow from London Road onto the A3290, the A4 or TVP.” (6)*

The traffic crossover at Cemetery Junction is also particularly disliked.

*“One of the major bottlenecks I see is on the connection from Cemetery Junction to the A329M along London Road. The queue this generates backs up all the way to Forbury most mornings.” (39)*

### ***King’s Road/ London Road***

The decision to make King’s Road one-way for cars travelling east and London Road one-way for cars travelling west is still *unpopular* with many respondents who mention it. One-way systems are not, on the whole, liked.

*“An examination should be made of the benefits or otherwise of one way systems to see whether traffic flow would be assisted by reversion to two way operation”... (202)*

However, there are particular complaints about the *system of lanes* on ***London Road***.

*“Following the one way system is fine apart from just before the Berkshire Hospital. There are three lanes which could be used to go into town; however no-one really uses the right hand lane. The right hand lane filters right before the Hospital; there is some pavement and a traffic light stopping you from going straight on. However no-one really uses this lane. This is a huge waste! As well as this, everyone in the middle lane are all waiting to get past this pavement and traffic light so that they can get into the right lane to turn right at the next turning. Therefore, the left lane ‘flows’ (and I use this in the loosest sense of the word), the*

*middle lane is full of people waiting to get into the right hand lane and the right hand lane is completely empty. This is an awful use of resources.” (395)*

**Eldon Road and Sidmouth St**, which link the two roads, are believed to be particularly problematic.

*“The junction at Queens Road/Sidmouth Street is a good example of where at some times of the day the priorities are hopelessly wrong so that even at 7 pm (when I normally leave the office) the traffic is tailing back for a considerable distance along the IDR going in an eastern direction but there is very little traffic coming down Sidmouth Street.” (84)*

### **Rose Kiln Lane Traffic Lights**

Traffic changes at **Rose Kiln Lane** on the A33, which runs from the M4 to the centre of Reading, are *extremely unpopular* with all respondents who mention them.

*“The new lights at Rose Kiln Lane have made matters much worse - in the morning they cause ripples that can go back as far as the IDR and in the evening the lack of two lanes and the ripple effect caused by the lights can often cause queues back to well beyond Island Road, both of which never occurred when there was a roundabout there. I doubt that these new lights even help traffic from the Brunel Retail Park to get on to the A33.” (296)*

*“When it used to be a roundabout there were rarely any hold-ups, it was fine for cycling, and traffic visiting the Civic Amenity site could return towards the M4 by doing a U-turn at the roundabout. Since the introduction of the traffic lights there are regularly huge delays at this junction and traffic visiting the Civic Amenity wanting to return towards the M4 has to do an illegal U turn at the traffic lights.” (492)*

### **Oxford Road/Tilehurst Road/ Bath Road (West)**

Respondents also identify problems with traffic congestion on the main routes in the West of the town. Here there is no particular agreement over pinch points, but the abolition of bus lay-bys on some routes and the existence of bus lanes is criticised.

*“Even on a bus, the gridlock down the main arteries such as Tilehurst Road and Oxford Road are off-putting and frustrating, not to mention polluting.” (37)*

*“For my current job, I travel westbound via Bath Road to Junction 12 of the M4 everyday. In some days I see eastbound queues of cars on Bath Road all the way to West Berkshire.” (48)*

*“I believe that Buses are a fantastic thing; however on the Oxford road there is no opportunity to overtake them even though within 10 meters of a bus stop there is a bus lay-by that is unused. I believe that the council is worried about Buses not being allowed back out into the traffic or that they would be late in comparison to their schedule. However, a) the Highway Code suggests that you should always let a bus out if it is indicating and b) the partial cause of all of the traffic is the buses holding the flow up.” (395)*

### **Cow Lane bridges (West)**

Cow Lane railway bridges are currently viewed by respondents as a pinch point on the direct route from Caversham Bridge to the West of Reading. The Reading Station development envisages a solution to this through a new two-way road skirting the Reading Festival site that would go under the railway lines. Cow Lane would be

closed, including to pedestrians and cyclists, which is itself unpopular with respondents.

*"Attack Cow Lane Bridges - I've been a Reading resident for 25 years, and Cow Lane was in the news when I came!" (219)*

*"Currently Cow Lane provides an important route for cyclists (and pedestrians) travelling from West Reading to Caversham, the River Thames, the Rivermead Leisure Centre and the Richfield Avenue industrial area. The need for this route will increase as new homes are occupied on the Battle Hospital site." (228)*

### **Oracle flyover**

The IDR is not felt, itself, to be a cause of traffic congestion, with the exception of tailbacks of cars waiting to get into the main car parks.

*"The Oracle shopping centre, whilst proving to be a commercial success has caused severe traffic problems, particularly at some weekend, often blocking the IDR from Castle Street and, indeed, blocking the IDR itself." (202)*

### **Traffic flow**

A number of respondents make the point that Reading's problem is not the sheer volume of traffic, but rather issues with *traffic flow* through the town.

*"It's not the volume of cars per se that's the problem, more the amount of stopping, pulling away etc. they have to do." (14)*

*"The so-called Inner Distribution ring road has some 15 sets of traffic lights, light controlled pedestrian crossings and roundabouts - one way or not such an abortion simply will not allow the traffic to flow." (196)*

Quite a few respondents have complaints about Reading's *traffic lights*. Phasing of traffic lights comes in for particular criticism.

*"It is abundantly clear to the daily motorist in Reading that there is a concerted effort to disrupt traffic flow by using traffic lights. Try driving from the roundabout at TGI Fridays down the IDR to the A33 and then on to the Madejski. EVERY set of traffic lights will stop you, no matter what the time of day..." (10)*

*"The traffic lights between Reading Police Station and the Prudential building does not let anything flow or even move! By changing the timing of all of these traffic lights within this range allowing the traffic to flow rather than being at a standstill would be a really good start. This is the same for the traffic lights between the Prison and the Prudential Building." (395)*

*"Re-phasing of traffic lights to halt a possible conflict at traffic signals is also a new problem and currently causing severe congestion in places. This is done to avoid oncoming traffic passing each other... We must accept some risk and find a level of safety that is suitable against a balance of traffic flow. The perfect example is the junction of Castle Hill/Russell Street/Coley Avenue/Bath Road." (23)*

*"The junction of Queen's Road/Sidmouth Street is a good example of where... the priorities are hopelessly wrong" (84)*

Some respondents also make the point that *pedestrian crossings* are a major cause of disruption to traffic flow.

*"There are no pedestrian footbridges on the IDR, so any single pedestrian can stop the flow."* (30)

### School Run

A number of respondents make specific mention of the impact of the *school run* on Reading's traffic, making the rush hour far worse in term times.

*"Journey time into Reading to work takes twice as long on term time days..."* (255)

*"It's noticeable that school run traffic is a major part of the problem -in school holidays, traffic is not nearly so bad."* (436)

### Students

Another term time issue in parts of the town is *students'* cars.

*"Students parking their cars on all the roads surrounding the university especially Elmhurst road make navigation around these roads difficult during term time -also Pepper lane, Northcourt Avenue."* (399)

### Match days

Another issue is excess travel generated on *football match* days.

*"One night a week I have to leave work in the rush hour to get to Wokingham before 7pm. it can take more than 30 minutes to go around 10 miles, especially when there is a football match on at Madejski Stadium."* (60)

*"We need greater consideration for the traffic congestion when matches are at the Mad Stad. Particularly if the stadium extension goes ahead at the end of the season."* (422)

Some people, however, think this is *manageable*.

*"Match days are not too much of a problem. Advance notice means that you can plan your journey around them."* (2)

### Deliveries/ refuse lorries

*Deliveries* and *refuse* collection are also felt to add to rush hour misery.

*"Today (14/11/07) was particularly bad. Having left home early to avoid meeting refuse lorries I encountered four in a 11/2 mile journey. The traffic everywhere seemed to be 'clogged' up, and there was no apparent reason for this. Is it really necessary for slow moving refuse lorries to glog up through routes during peak hours?"* (20)

*"(RBC) should also only allow deliveries at non peak times."* (166)

*"Another example relates to deliveries - can we insist that deliveries are made before or after rush hours in some areas? This is a particular issue with the building material deliveries and skip deliveries where the delivery vehicle has to stop traffic in order to drop off/pick up their load."* (422)

## Inconsiderate Parking

The lack of *off-road parking* and consequent random parking of cars is felt to add to road congestion.

*"Parking is at a premium all around the area. Cars parked on the roadside frequently narrow roads considerably." (444)*

*"A cause of considerable congestion on bus routes in particular, in many residential areas, is the random parking of private cars and light vans on both sides of the carriageway, especially in many narrow roads. This practice effectively reduces the carriageway from often three and usually two, carriageways to one only. This causes considerable swerving as the buses thread their way at low speed through these random obstructions." (316)*

## Buses

Buses are viewed as a major cause of congestion in the town. The decision to stop using bus *lay-bys* is particularly unpopular.

*"Why in certain parts of our town do traffic planners use buses at stops to bring traffic to a stop where there used to be lay-bys, for the bus stop and traffic to be able to flow accordingly" (115)*

Bus *lanes* too come in for criticism and some respondents would like them removing, or at least for them to operate for a *limited* period only each day.

*"Any scheme that favours buses is, ipso facto, going to create congestion for other road users." (23)*

*"Bus lanes should not be allowed to continue operation over twenty four hours of the day. London, with all its congestion problems, manages with a 0700-1900 system and so should Reading." (202)*

*"Bus, motor cycle and taxi lanes should be restricted to operating at peak rush hour times only. May I suggest 7am to 9.30am and 3.30pm to 7pm?" (166)*

'*Bus gates*', *chicanes*, *traffic islands* and *road humps* are also disliked.

*"We also have bus gates at Oxford Road and Basingstoke Road. These force drivers to make a left turn at a set of signals, travel all the way around a roundabout then back to the set of signals they were already at." (23)*

*"Road width restrictions such as chicanes are really unnecessary. They were put in to aid Reading Buses, but they do not have the right to impede other motorists' progress. They are extremely dangerous when sited near bus stops." (166)*

## Lorries

Some respondents comment on the perceived negative impact of lorries and HGV travelling through Reading. There is even a suggestion that *sat nav* has made the problem worse.

*"Huge lorries use the Woodcote Road as a cut between motorways, inappropriately, as there are no signs telling them to use the official designated route from Oxford (A34) and it is impacting on the local communities and businesses. The use of Sat Nav means more and more*

*are travelling on inappropriate routes, and, for example, getting stuck under the Cow Lane Bridges.” (94)*

### Car parks

Car parks, and especially the Oracle *car park*, are seen as part of the problem.

*“Queuing on the road for access to car parks is unacceptable; car park operators should be obliged to design their facilities to accept a much higher rate of ingress.” (51)*

*“Congestion is caused by silly practices such as too few ticket barriers at the Oracle, leading to gridlock on shopping days. The answer is not more concrete but a traffic policeman compelling drivers not to attempt to enter the car parks. Within a week the shopkeepers and Centre owners would solve the problem from self-interest.” (371)*

*“It seems crazy to be building new huge car parks in the town centre at Chatham St when the roads cannot cope with getting cars in/out of Oracle/Queens Road car parks without backing up around the major IDR routes.” (429)*

### Poor traffic signs

As are poor traffic *signs*.

*“Traffic directional signs are another example of clumsy mismanagement. There are no signs in Tilehurst telling drivers how to get to get out of it and on to the M4. On Kings Road, the signs advising drivers of the correct lanes for the A4 or Wokingham Road are quite appalling. First is a sign indicating that the A4-bound traffic can use both lanes. Then another sign, set far too close to Cemetery Junction itself, indicates that the left hand lane only is for the A4. Tourists looking for the A329M discover, too late, that they are in the lane for Wokingham Road...” (23)*

### Other ad hoc causes

On top of all this are the ad hoc causes - *roadworks, accidents, flooding* etc - which help to make the traffic unpredictable.

*“Hold ups are caused by a combination of road works, both on and off the motorway, road traffic accidents in the Reading area (with a knock on effect from those in Basingstoke) ... To add to this, there are currently road closures caused by flooding.” (444)*

## Political boundaries - a cause and a solution

### A regional issue

Reading’s traffic congestion is felt to be in part the result of, or even heavily influenced by, *regional policy*.

*“The Government’s goal (is) to use Reading to fulfil its housing and commercial projected needs for the South East... This is an important issue, whether the town is being directed from within its boundaries or from external pressures... The view I hold is that the town has rejected the one-way IDR and with it the development required in government planning.”(214)*

A number of respondents make the point that Reading’s traffic issues go beyond Reading’s historic boundaries and are either an issue for the wider Reading urban area or are indeed a *regional* issue.

*"Transport in Reading is not just Reading, it's Wokingham, West Berkshire, Oxfordshire etc." (45)*

*"...increased traffic originating from new housing, not only within the borough, but also in Wokingham and south Oxfordshire." (67)*

*"Reading is also a focal point for employment and shopping for outer rural/urban areas which are not under the control of Reading. All of the outer areas of Oxfordshire, West Berkshire and North Hampshire are likely to contribute to traffic growth in Reading. (440)*

*"This situation is likely to be made worse by future development by South Oxfordshire. South Oxfordshire itself acknowledges that it has an above average car ownership and that its population is prepared and does travel greater distances for shopping and employment than the national average. In its plan South Oxfordshire has noted the existence of land to the south of the Henley Road and to the east of Caversham Park Road." (440)*

And some respondents feel that Reading is made to shoulder the burden ***unfairly***.

*"...neighbouring Districts of Wokingham, Newbury and South Oxfordshire distaining to shoulder their part while pocketing the advantages." (371)*

*"Reading's traffic problems are not just Reading's, submissions from Wokingham Boro' and West Berkshire acknowledge that fact. I feel that Oxfordshire County Council should not be allowed to... imply it is not their problem. Their letter to the commission took no account of the problems they have on a regular basis at Henley Bridge, nor of the congestion at Playhatch/Sonning, the amount of traffic uses the A4074 on what is an inadequate, unsafe Oxfordshire road. As a council they didn't hesitate in building an additional bridge at Wallingford when it moved from Berkshire C.C. to Oxfordshire C.C." (522)*

A number of respondents stress the need for cooperation with ***neighbouring authorities***.

*"It's important that efforts are directed to completing the (bus) network in partnership with Reading Transport, West Berkshire and Wokingham Borough Council..." (217)*

*"Since much of the geographical area of Reading is either in West Berkshire, South Oxfordshire or Wokingham, an integrated transport policy which benefits everyone either needs greater co-operation between councils or a single transport authority." (492)*

For some respondents the answer would be for ***GOSE*** to intervene...

*"In the event of a politically-driven conflict over a transport scheme that has a regional impact, both should agree to be bound by a decision made by the regional office (GOSE)." (217)*

... or to create a ***Greater Reading*** authority...

*"Reading is surrounded by other authorities that seem not to care how their increase in population has a serious negative impact upon its traffic management. Reading surely needs to be in control of what is, in effect, Greater Reading." (32)*

*Revision of the Borough boundary is long overdue, although it is understood that there is resistance to change by the neighbouring authorities, (West Berkshire, Wokingham, etc), and by some of their residents." (405)*

*"Perhaps there is a justified need to extend Reading's boundaries into Oxon!?" (522)*

...or even to recreate **Berkshire County Council**.

*"Recreate Berkshire County Council, destroyed over a decade ago, and grant it appropriate planning powers." (73)*

## Major engineering solutions for Reading's traffic

### More Thames bridges

Probably the most popular suggestion mentioned spontaneously for improving Reading's traffic is a **third bridge** over the Thames, usually envisaged as linking Thames Valley Park on the south bank of the Thames with the Henley Road (A4155) on the Oxfordshire bank.

*"If Reading does not get a third bridge over the Thames, it doesn't matter what plans there are to improve roads, make the IDR one-way or close them - the Thames is a bottleneck that needs to be addressed..." (5)*

*"Traffic from east Caversham and B481 Peppard Road would be routed via Caversham Park Road to the third bridge and across to join the motorway network, instead of via Reading Bridge and Cemetery Junction" (217)*

Some respondents thought that the bridge might even generate **revenue**.

*"If the bridge had a toll of 50p or £1... it might pay for itself in the long run..." (25)*

There is some concern about the possible impact of a third crossing on traffic in **Caversham**, with suggestions that a northern bypass of some kind might be needed - and was **not** necessarily **desirable**.

*"Although a 3<sup>d</sup> Thames crossing would alleviate pressure on Reading, I believe this could cause worse effects North of the River, unless a Caversham bypass is built to the A4074." (10)*

*"Obviously we need another bridge across the Thames (goes without saying) but it's not obvious where to deposit the traffic on the north side - you'll probably need some new road infrastructure in Caversham to cope with it..." (39)*

*"Were I a Caversham resident, I would be very interested to know how traffic would travel to and from a northern bridgehead of the A329 (M) located somewhere along the A4155 Henley Road ---- There would be the 'Caversham Park Expressway' for a start (currently known as Caversham Park Road." (507)*

Others respondents want not only a third new bridge, but also a **fourth** bridge. There are differing views about where this might be situated.

*"The (fourth) bridge would cross the river Thames west of Dean's farm, Caversham, and on the opposite bank near the Tesco superstore." (203)*

*"Urgently consider building a fourth bridge West of the town..." (123)*

Three respondents suggested that, rather than building a third major bridge over the Thames in Reading, **Sonning Bridge** should be **redeveloped** or **replaced**.

*"To improve my plight to and from work, Sonning Bridge needs to be widened to allow two way traffic over it. Either that or a vast improvement in the current traffic light phasing". (121)*

*"Personally I think that a better solution would be a Sonning bypass bridge to the east of the village, of similar flavour to the Winterbrook Bridge around Wallingford." (507)*

The idea of a new Thames bridge does have a few *opponents*, although they are in a minority.

*"There is little evidence of radical thinking - arguing for a third bridge across the Thames fills me with dread - it's the same stale argument about having extra lanes on motorways." (264)*

*"Do not build a 3rd bridge over the Thames. The area of South Oxfordshire adjacent to Reading is blissfully peaceful and traffic free compared to the countryside to the east and south of Reading, in Wokingham, all of which is continually blighted by fast moving traffic, even on narrow country lanes." (540)*

*"I am opposed to the construction at Kennet mouth of a third Thames crossing or the possible transport link to Thames Valley Park. Kennet mouth is an important area of recreation and natural beauty which should not be damaged by the construction of further bridges. The solution to the problem of congestion is to reduce the volume of traffic, not provide more routes for it." (168)*

Some respondents suggest that the third bridge over the Thames should be just a *footbridge* for *pedestrians* and *cyclists*, perhaps including a light railway or trams.

*"For pedestrians and cyclists there is a need for a separate bridge across the Thames halfway between the two existing road bridges, and also for better access across the railway (which perhaps should be included in the big station redevelopment)." (183)*

### Cross Town Route

Second in popularity of the major engineering works proposed by respondents is the revival of the idea of a *cross-town* route, first mooted in the 1980s, to run from Vastern Road along Napier Road to the A329M roundabout.

*"Some years ago, when there was a Conservative County Council, they proposed a new road... Tesco built a large supermarket ready for it; they did not want to be in a cul-de-sac. The road would have offered considerable relief for the Forbury, King's Road and Cemetery Junction and therefore the IDR. But the local Labour run Borough Council blocked the building of the road purely for party political reasons, so Reading central traffic continued to suffer." (123)*

*"Widen each lane of Napier Road (to widen it slightly would not destroy King's Meadow) ... and on to the present terminus of the A3290. I foresee very little 'Green' destruction; there is no rolling countryside or 'Bluebell' Woods on the route that I have suggested... (and) With trains roaring over the Kennet railway bridges every few minutes there is very little prolonged tranquillity" (49)*

*"Address bottleneck at Cemetery junction - consider linking A329 (M) along river to Napier Rd - perhaps as elevated road above railway line. " (441)*

One or two respondents point out that there is an alternative route, south of the railway lines.

*“There is just a possibility of a relief route for the A4 in East Reading from the Sutton’s roundabout (towards Thames Valley Park, whose access roads are the best in the area), alongside the Southern railway, crossing the Kennet between the rail bridges and then crossing the Southern line where it dips, joining Kenavon drive and so reaching the Forbury road IDR dual carriageway. It would require persistence but is preferable to the Valley route scheme over King’s Meadow.” (371)*

*“A new relief road should be built alongside the station from the Toys are Us roundabout to the TVP roundabout to relieve the pressure on Queens Road past TVU. Yes it’s a protected area, but a train line goes through the area so I’m sure a small road could too... and a lot of the area between these two roundabouts is just waste land.” (423)*

### **Ring road**

Some respondents feel that Reading should take an even more radical approach and go for a full *ring road*.

*“Another suggestion is a ring road round the outside of Reading, again with plenty of park-and-ride access points.” (222)*

*“It would appear that, in principle, an outer ring road is the solution, including new river bridges and partly involving M4 and A329M thus diverting unnecessary traffic away from the centre and other areas such as Sonning. Although very fundamental, long term, this appears to be the only solution...” (79)*

One respondent also remembers proposals from the 1970s for a *southern bypass*.

*“There was a plan to have a Southern bypass running along the M4 from Junction 10 to Junction 12. In the 1970s it was part built, it could be finished if there was cooperation between Councils.” (42)*

### **Pinch points**

Some respondents give extremely *detailed suggestions* for how to *manage* these points of congestion. Whilst not replicated in this overview, they can be found on the Commission’s section of the RBC website - notably submissions *4, 23, 61, 203, 217, 251, 271 and 517*.

### **One-way IDR**

Only a minority of respondents mention the IDR in any context. Of those who comment specifically on the one-way IDR scheme, the overwhelming *majority* were *opposed*.

There were a range of concerns about increased *mileage*, impact on *business*, access by the *emergency services* and suitability for *cyclists*.

*“The one-way IDR is a death trap for cyclists” (14)*

*“The one-way IDR looks a disaster. Longer journeys mileage wise” (19)*

*"Most of the stores I go to - Wickes, Drews, Homebase, Tesco would require a complete encirclement of the whole town in order to get there." (53)*

*"If the proposed one-way IDR comes to fruition it could cause no end of problems in an emergency..." (49)*

Even amongst some respondents who might have been prepared to give the scheme the benefit of the doubt; there was bemusement about why the proposal was for the IDR to be one-way in an *anti-clockwise* direction.

*"If you are going to make the IDR one-way, for heaven's sake make it clockwise so you don't need traffic lights on all the junctions - you could do it with filter lanes and the traffic coming on and off at each junction would not need to cross (there is a good reason why roundabouts go clockwise). It might actually make good sense like this." (39)*

*One-way IDR? Maybe - I'm not sure but please do make it clockwise to simplify the junctions. There's a good reason why roundabouts all go clockwise in this country..." (520)*

A small number of respondents, however, were whole-heartedly in *favour* of the scheme.

*"I thought the one-way IDR seemed to be a very good start - at least it looked like the council were prepared to take significant measures (and possibly take a risk which I think is necessary to tackle the problem)." (1)*

*"A one-way IDR would have been an excellent scheme for stimulating further commercial development." (6)*

Some respondents felt that a key issue with the IDR was that it was *badly handled* politically.

*"Councillors appear to have been persuaded on technical grounds, but paid too little attention to ensuring that the public understood the scheme." (176)*

## Other traffic solutions for Reading

### Park and Ride

Reading currently has limited *Park and Ride* facilities, with services from the Madejski Stadium in South Reading and from Loddon Bridge (Showcase Cinema), located to the East, near the A329M in Winnersh. The latter is operated jointly with Wokingham Borough Council.

*"It is not easy to park at the Showcase and access is complicated as the buses stop at 1800, even though the shops and restaurants are still open in town." (258)*

Quite a few respondents suggest that a *better* Park and Ride network would cut down the number of car journeys to the town centre.

*"Park and Ride facilities to the north of the Thames and an additional one to the south. Improved signage to persuade people to use the existing Park & Rides. Better flood protection for the Winnersh Park & Ride." (1)*

*"Provide free park and ride high security car parks at the Thames Valley Business Park... the Green Park end of the A4. Find a site for the A4 west of Calcot and finally one in Caversham for traffic from Oxford." (30)*

*"A comprehensive bus Park & Ride system is suggested (including) Mapledurham playing fields... Clayfield Copse recreation ground... Shepherds Hill Roundabout, Woodley... East of the former Shire Hall... Burghfield Road, Southcote..." (203)*

Some people would like to see this combined with *dearer parking* and/or *fewer* parking spaces in the town centre.

*"Stop building parking lots, as this encourages people to drive in and park there. Instead build more Park and Rides, spread around Reading..." (50)*

Current park and ride facilities are felt, however, to be too *expensive* to tempt people out of their cars.

*"Now, I really, really would like to do my bit and use the park and ride scheme, but the problem is the cost. It is £2 a person on the park and ride bus from the Madejski into Reading, and true, there are group / family tickets but these still turn out far more costly than even what the 'expensive' Oracle centre car parks charge: the relatively small amount of £2.30 to park for an hour and not much more than that for two hours, in other words, more convenient, and cheaper than the park and ride." (389)*

*"Motorists would be encouraged to use the park and ride scheme by making it better value for money than parking in the town car parks. " (444)*

### Traffic Lights

A number of respondents claim that Reading has far *too many* traffic lights and that the number should be reduced.

*"You should also take traffic lights out of the town planners shopping list. They seem to stick them everywhere as an alternative to proper infrastructure development." (398)*

*"There are far too many places where traffic is stopped. Removal of traffic lights and other systems must be a priority with the objective of keeping the traffic moving (safely) at all times." (65)*

Some suggest different or improved *traffic light technology*.

*"One solution, which may not cost a fortune, and provide some relief while the commission looks into possible solutions is to create a Floline Traffic Light System. Also to introduce peak hour reversal of priorities as use to happen at the top of Castle Hill before the lights were upgraded and traffic slowed." (211)*

*"All traffic lights should be connected to a 'scoot system' which I believe operated in this town some years back." (166)*

*"The use of smart traffic lights may be a good answer in a few select places. A Closed Loop Main Arterial Transportation (CLMAT) system can be configured to allow programmable delays and communication between groups of traffic lights via redundant loop fibre optic signaling. A system of this sort is capable to allow green-light pre-empts for emergency vehicles and also red/green light advance/delay for faster public transport." (306)*

### Restrictions on lorries

Several respondents suggest using *weight* or *peak period restrictions* to limit the access of lorries to the town.

*"Heavy lorries... entering Reading just to pass through to another town must be stopped. Place weight restrictions as other towns have and do not be put off by other counties who object - this is about our town." (13)*

*"Impose peak period restrictions on HGV movements or a congestion charge for HGV only." (298)*

### Congestion charge

Around two dozen respondents mention some kind of *congestion charge*, road *pricing* or *road tolls*, with two out of three in favour ...

*"Charge drivers driving into the town centre during weekends." (50)*

*"Tolls for people using the roads in and around Reading" (118)*

*"Serious consideration should be given to electronic tolling over the two bridges..." (407)*

*"Implement congestion charging for non-locals entering Reading during the rush hour - with single occupant vehicles charged more..." (504)*

... and one third *opposed*.

*"The answer is not... a congestion charge...because more affluent people will choose to pay at the expense of the less well off." (254)*

*"Don't introduce congestion charging as it just means the rich can pollute but the poor can't. Also some people genuinely need their car for work or immediately after work so don't penalise them." (427)*

### Car-occupancy

Several respondents comment on the number of cars travelling with just a single occupant and suggest a mix of rewards and penalties to encourage more car-sharing.

*"Action must be taken to discourage single occupancy car use in peak times." (138)*

*"I suggest that there be a scheme put in place to provide an incentive for multi-occupancy commuting such as bus lane use for high occupancy car-pooling (>2 in car). Positive incentives coupled with negative ones are key to reduce wasteful car use." (307)*

*"Perhaps cars with 3 or more people in them should be allowed to use bus lanes." (427)*

*"(Bridge tolls but) free bridge passage ... for travel in high occupancy vehicles with greater than two persons." (306)*

### Lower Speed Limits

Around a dozen respondents suggest imposing a 20mph speed limit on some roads in order to improve traffic flow.

*“Lower speed limits on all but major roads. A default speed limit of 20mph would be a start followed by some serious enforcement.” (56)*

### **Red routes**

The introduction of red routes, where parking and unloading is forbidden, at least during peak hours, is suggested by a couple of respondents.

*“The introduction of a version of London’s Red Route along the A4 from the Cemetery Junction to the A329M roundabout would vastly improve traffic flow, which is stalled by inconsiderate parking” (525)*

### **Better enforcement**

A number of respondents suggest that better *enforcement* of traffic and parking regulations would ease the flow of traffic.

*“Prompt and effective policing of existing parking restrictions.” (431)*

*“There is no enforcement of box junctions so (buses) are frequently blocked from making progress.” (394)*

*“Stop pavement parking - preventing people with pushchairs or in wheelchairs from using the pavements for their correct purpose.” (520)*

*“Enforce yellow box junctions AND pedestrian crossings.” (520)*

### **Public transport and other green solutions**

Respondents fall into two camps when considering the role of public transport, walking and cycling as potential solutions to traffic issues in the centre of Reading.

On the one hand, some feel that the private car is here to stay and that planners should not attempt to place *restrictions* on cars in favour of other modes of transport. There is a *vociferous* car lobby.

*“Why is it that Reading traffic planners think that they and they alone, have cracked the age-old problem of Supply and Demand by assuming that if they place enough impediments in the path of motorists they will simply go away? We have a town full of unused cycle lanes, little-used pedestrian crossings, vast swathes of tarmac restricted to buses only, exhaust-pipe busting speed humps, “traffic calming” width restrictions, none of which work, while motorists are left to fume and sweat on what little road surface remains.” (51)*

Many others feel that the *only* way forward is a massive drive to *improve* public transport, possibly even requiring central government intervention.

*“The traffic has become progressively worse in Reading and inevitably it will continue to do so in the future. It will continue to worsen because as soon as travel by car is made any easier, more car journeys will be made. We cannot ever satisfy the appetite of this monster, unless there is a fast and reliable alternative.” (406)*

*“The solution can only be much better and cheaper public transport hand in hand with measures to reduce car use such as reducing the amount of parking in the centre of town.*

*Unfortunately the cheaper public transport can probably only really be done by central government funding. I would support an increase in income tax to fund this." (78)*

The *Thames Valley Park shuttle bus* is cited as an example of what could be done.

*"One of the most successful green transport schemes in Reading is the \*free\* Thames Valley Park shuttle bus service into town. It is packed in the morning and very busy at lunchtimes. The point is that if you want to get people off the road and onto public transport, you have to heavily subsidise the service; not because people are cheapskates, but because the current bus ticket prices are much the same as the cost of petrol and parking for a car!" (389)*

## **Buses**

Around one third of respondents make comments on Reading's bus services, many of them seeing improved public transport as the only sensible way forward for the town.

On balance respondents feel that the bus service is *improving*...

*"Projects like the 'quality routes and refresh of vehicles have moved bus transport from being a 'poor option' to something acceptable." (256)*

... but for a number of reasons, including *cost* and *reliability*, very few respondents feel that the current service is good enough to achieve modal shift.

*"A change of attitude is what is really needed, but this can only begin after public transport in Reading has a reputation of being regular, reliable and cost effective." (41)*

## ***Ticketing policies***

Only one or two respondents describe fares on Reading buses as reasonable. The overwhelming majority are highly critical of the *cost*.

*"Currently it is far cheaper to use a car, particularly for a family. Stupidity in my opinion." (138)*

*"The cost of travel by bus is disgraceful: it is often cheaper for two or three people to go by taxi." (304)*

*"To go to town and return costs £6 (for two) you can park for 5 hours for that..." (275)*

There are *unfavourable* comparisons with ticket prices and policies on other bus services, some of them local.

*"Please introduce a system where you can purchase a book of tickets at a reduced price to be used when required. Oxford buses, such as the X40/X39 which pass through Caversham do this - I can purchase a 10 ticket card for £7.35 - compare this to the £15 I would pay on Reading buses." (402)*

*"You can buy an annual bus travelcard, valid for all London, for £560.00 (£10.77 per week), and one for Birmingham/West Midlands for £486.00 (£9.35 per week). Why are Reading's annual tickets higher than London's and Birmingham's?" (44)*

*"Bus tickets that allow a change of service on one ticket thus allowing radial journeys. Example Brussels." (95)*

**Child fares** are felt to be too high.

*“Reading buses for example, insist that children age 11-19 should carry a Readi-ID in order to guarantee child fares - what's the point? Child return fares are £1.70, but it is cheaper to buy an ADULT 7 day ticket for South Reading - there is no option of a child ticket - this should be reviewed, why should children who are obviously under 16 be made to pay adult fares when they should be paying child prices? (145)*

The policy of not **giving change** on buses is also disliked.

*“Reading Transport bus drivers require the correct fare to be given, but Reading Transport do not state on bus stops or on the outside of buses what the correct fare is, even though bus fares are standardised. Regular users get to know, but strangers or first-time users have no way of knowing what change they are going to need? How can this need not be obvious to management?” (58)*

Amongst a number of suggestions for **reducing** fares are:

*“Introduce a family fare so that it's always cheaper to take a bus into town than to drive in and park there.” (50)*

*“Free bus tickets for first year students to encourage bus use... Why are there no substantial student discounts available? (9)*

*“Free bus passes to all Reading residents. Very few people would make costly journeys to town or to work when there is a free alternative. Most people care less about the environment or the general economy, but a free ride, they'll take that.” (430)*

### **Buses are unreliable**

In many areas, Reading buses face the same problems as the rest of Reading's traffic and this can make them **unreliable**, so people may prefer to use cars.

*“Punctuality is extremely random, with services (route 31) often skipped...” (329)*

*“I occasionally use public transport but... I cannot guarantee time of arrival in Reading.” (260)*

*“The traffic problems in Reading cause the bus services to be unreliable - if people are going to be stuck in traffic they would rather be stuck in the comfort of their cars.” (36)*

### **More bus lanes and direct routes in the town centre**

Whilst some respondents are adamant that bus lanes are a major cause of Reading's traffic problems, others believe that the answer is **more** bus lanes and more direct bus routes in order to improve the reliability of public transport.

*“Buses get caught up in traffic when bus lanes end, so we should be turning more bus lanes into bus-only lanes.” (22)*

*"Better continuous bus lanes with cameras on all to prosecute car infringers at peak times"*  
(40)

*"Buses ... go all around the town to get to the station."* (258)

### ***Not enough cross-town routes***

There is also criticism that many bus routes seem to go to the town centre, with only a handful of cross-town routes, and that cross-town travel can be expensive as a result.

*"No proper North-South bus corridor, far too few cross town routes ..."* (394)

*"No service exists to serve the Reading area on a radial basis e.g. no service exists between the South West, west and South Reading without the need to go into the centre of Reading and change buses."* (521)

### ***Bus network/availability***

Respondents point out that the bus network is not comprehensive - particularly in the areas of Greater Reading that are outside the borders of Reading Borough Council and where the Council is not the passenger transport authority.

*"Residents of this area (Tilehurst/Purley) are very poorly served by public transport if they are not near a bus stop served by the no. 17 premier service."* (3)

*"Bus services from the Reading Station to the west of Reading... are infrequent and indirect"*  
(223)

*"There need to be new routes to cover the whole of the urban area. There are some areas of Reading I cannot reach by bus ... For instance there is no bus from either Woodley/Sonning to either Twyford or Earley station. If there was I would use the train into Reading for work."*  
(250)

*"The number of buses needs to be increased for people travelling from the local towns... (Earley/Woodley)"* (307)

Bus services *outside the borough boundaries* are also particularly likely to be criticised for shortcomings in availability.

*"The morning bus service from Sonning to Reading is inadequate. The last direct bus leaves before 0730. The evening service from Reading to Sonning is no use whatsoever it is so unreliable".* (213)

*"The buses stop early and after 1900 there are hardly any. (Address in Earley.)"* (46)

Within the borough boundaries it is noted that:

*"There are large areas of middle class Caversham Heights and Emmer Green not covered by a bus service."* (5)

*"The lack of an evening bus service from Caversham to Reading is frustrating to me as I work shifts and don't own a car. I would also like to see more bus services on Sundays between Caversham and Reading."* (191)

### ***Bus information/ marketing***

Passenger transport information is felt to need improvement. Whilst the real time boards are praised, they are not felt to be totally accurate, and they are found only on part of the bus network.

*"The real time boards are only useful if they are accurate - The word 'Due' has taken on a whole new meaning - buses disappear from the board without appearing at the stop, some appear to go backwards as times are amended..." (36)*

*"A London example - the use of spider maps and heavier bus advertising have increased use of buses." (256)*

*"Reading Buses is not good at marketing... When they try to do something new (for instance, a service linking Earley and Woodley a few years ago, which they made no perceptible attempt to publicise or encourage the public to use and after a very short trial period dropped) they tend not to support it vigorously enough." (73)*

### ***Smaller buses needed***

A number of respondents feel that the use of ***smaller buses*** would allow more frequent and flexible services.

*"Create shuttle buses from University Campus to town running regularly with student fares." (9)*

*"Consider small shuttle buses from the park and ride to places such as the hospital" (444)*

*"Bring in smaller shuttle mini buses to key points within the network, e.g. M4, J11, A329 at Winnersh etc. More frequent pickups that can use bus lanes will get a better take up rate than larger infrequent buses..." (19)*

### ***No bus station***

Some respondents regret the demise of the old covered ***bus station*** on Station Hill and suggest that Reading needs a new station.

*"Lack of a modern bus station is a glaring omission from Reading as a town." (9)*

### **Trains**

Trains, like buses, are criticised for being too ***expensive*** and sometimes too ***slow***.

*"To avoid (the Reading rush hour) I have started to use the train. It is excruciatingly expensive (about £3500 a year), highly unreliable and I often have to stand (several times a week). (29)*

Some respondents believe that ***poor service*** is institutional in the way that trains are currently run.

*"The point is that the train operators are driven solely by profit (after all, why shouldn't they be, without further legislation?) and will not voluntarily expand a service or put pressure on network rail to make infrastructure improvements (e.g. longer platforms) if they don't think that their return on investment will be great enough. In short, the current conditions of the train operator's operating licence are woefully inadequate, and tangible improvements in rail transport will not be realised by 'working closely' with the operator's owners - they need to be forced to improve." (389)*

The current shortcomings of Reading's *main station* and current railway infrastructure are noted.

*"Improve access onto and off the platforms (at Reading station) as they are dangerously congested at morning rush hour" (255)*

*"Although the direct links are great they are regularly delayed, especially in the evening which can be frustrating. The station itself has good facilities but the platform layout and signage is such that if you need to quickly change platforms it can be hard work. In addition to this the access facilities are poor. The lighting in the car park is not ideal and the lifts are pretty shabby, regularly there is fresh graffiti and the smell of urine." (75)*

A number of respondents would like to see *Crossrail* extended to Reading.

*"Cross Rail, if it ever goes ahead, should be extended to Reading to offer through services from Reading to Heathrow, the City of London and Docklands." (192)*

It is also felt that the rail network would be enhanced by more *suburban stations*.

*"A train station for Green Park, for Thames Valley Park ... would be a real boon" (5)*

*"Open railway stations at TVP and Portman Road for those business parks and also in Southcote..." (505)*

Problems *parking* at suburban railway stations and with *picking up* and setting down at the main station are regretted.

*"I know that stations such as Tilehurst, West Reading, Early, Twyford and Winnersh do not have a surplus of parking space." (211)*

*"The drop off facilities to the south of Reading station are very poor." (220)*

One respondent raises the issue of how people will get home from the *upgraded* Reading station.

*"This will only be more effective if passengers who use Reading station can get to and from home easily either by car or an efficient bus service." (439)*

### **Mass Rapid Transit (MRT)**

The idea of introducing some kind of *light railway* system or *trams* is popular with around one in twenty of respondents. It is felt to be a much more *modern* and *sophisticated* version of public transport than the bus.

*"OK the buses (now) look prettier, but they are still buses, lumbering, noisy, and no better than the road surface they run on. Compare the ride to a journey on a modern light rail system, in Germany particularly, and you will get my point." (406)*

*"Electric trams are perceived as cosmopolitan and more ecologically sound (although it really depends on where you get the electricity). These may be more attractive to people who might otherwise be reluctant to leave their cars at the park and ride. Those who think catching a bus is a sign of poverty might be tempted on to trendy trams." (520)*

*"A decent mass-transit system. Imagine a tram or light rail system connecting the Park and Ride site at Junction 11 with South Reading, the town centre and main line station." (22)*

*"A dream solution would be to have continental type trams covering inner and outer Reading with regular services at 10 minute intervals, with cars therefore not being necessary for short journeys." (94)*

### Coaches

A small number of respondents mention *coaches* as a transport alternative to the train and regret the *lack* of good coach connections in the town centre.

*"It doesn't really seem like Reading has any good coach connections (cheaper alternative to the train) as they stop very far out of town and their services seem limited and don't seem (to me) to be advertised much - I think there should be more coaches, more advertisement of the services and deals that offer better value." (399)*

*"Reading's increasingly high-quality local bus services should be complemented with a franchised regional coach network, operated by accessible, high-quality coaches." (217)*

### Taxis/ Private Hire Vehicles

One or two respondents mention *taxis* and *private hire vehicles* as an alternative to the private car and complain about the *lack* of *taxi ranks* around the town.

*"Black cabs work well from station - how about having large cab ranks at Oracle etc so they are more visible for shoppers, etc. perhaps people would be inclined to bus in from suburbs and then jump in taxi home when weighed down with shopping etc" (429)*

The *restrictions* on private hire vehicles are felt to be particularly unfair.

*"Design and build, as with black cabs, specific area to hold private hire cabs." (287)*

*"Whilst recognising there is a degree of abuse of the regulations... I have observed that traffic and parking restrictions within the IDR make it very difficult for Private Hire drivers to meet the reasonable requirements and behaviour of their customers legally... The public have a right to decide to use private hire not hackney from the station and the layout makes it fairly difficult for the public to exercise this decision... And where can a passenger from the Oracle Riverside complex ask to be picked up? Legally?" (487)*

Other respondents find both taxis and private hire cars to be an *irritant*.

*"Town centre traffic could be greatly reduced by prohibiting all "private hire cars" from using the street parking places, when they should be at their bases awaiting telephone bookings." (274)*

*"Air quality near the main rail station bus stops is particularly poor due to an excess of taxis at the taxi rank that sit idle with engines running." (306)*

### River buses

Two respondents mention the possibility of making more use of Reading's *rivers*.

*"Why not use the river Thames more? E.g. river buses from Caversham/Tilehurst to Reading Bridge and the Thames Valley Park" (5)*

### Cycling

More than one in three respondents mentions cycling. Whilst not everyone would have cyclists considered as a *priority* group...

*"The costs of the improvements in terms of benefit to the main groups of users (commercial traffic, domestic traffic, mass transport, cyclists and pedestrians) are markedly unequal. The costs per pedestrian and per cyclist are very high because there are so few of them. Yet the proposed space given over to these two groups are disproportionately high. Part of this may be unquestioned political correctness and a zeal for safety that is not driven by a proper understanding of risk" (220)*

... the overwhelming majority regard cycling as a *solution*, or at least a *partial solution*, to Reading's traffic problems.

### ***Cycling can be dangerous***

A number of respondents note that cycling in Reading can be positively *dangerous* and that poorly designed *cycle facilities* can add to that danger.

*"Ideally I would ... use my bike, but do so only rarely. This is because in heavy traffic. I am frankly scared of the centre of Reading. There are too many places (particularly bridges and roundabouts) where I have to mix in with cars and lorries." (105)*

*"Some existing cycle lanes are terribly badly designed and dangerous - the worst example I know of is to be found along the Oxford Road, a short way from Reading West station towards the town centre; the cycle lane tapers to nothing at one point where the road is already artificially narrow and it is an accident waiting to happen." (389)*

### ***Cross town routes***

The lack of legitimate and safe *cross-town* cycleways is particularly regretted.

*"Legitimate cycling in the centre is currently confined to the same one-way routes provided for motor traffic. This makes journeys bizarrely tortuous and needs to be re-examined." (234)*

*"The route across the town centre (is illegal)... The fact that I am illegally using areas where it is legal to drive a lorry is even more bizarre... Reading is dominated by nose to tail cars driven by impatient people or nicely pedestrianised areas where cyclists cannot go... (109)*

Although one visually-impaired respondent makes the plea:

*"Make the inner town a pleasant pedestrian area free of traffic and bicycles (visually impaired people are frightened of cycles as they cannot see or hear them and they do not stay in defined places)" (486)*

### ***Incomplete cycle network***

A major issue is the very *incomplete* cycle network. Cycle routes do not necessarily link up to other routes - they just end.

*"I commute by bicycle. The major issues for me are:*

- *Cycle paths do not cover the whole route, which is all on major roads*
- *Cycle paths that do exist often end just after a major junction; this is dangerous and inconvenient" (249)*

### ***Advisory cycle lanes***

The road network is not seen as cycle friendly. Major roads tend not to have *advisory* cycle lanes.

*"Cyclists are not legally able to ride up the inside of a queue of stationary traffic (they are supposed to overtake to the right). A cycle lane would make it legal... (87)*

### **Poor cycle crossings**

A number of respondents make the point that it is extremely difficult for cyclists to **cross** over major roads, and that the IDR is a particular barrier.

*"If you make cycle crossings too tortuous, they will not be used. For example, if I were to use the cycle crossings past Winnersh roundabout, I should have to stop at three sets of lights. I don't. I use the same route as the cars and this is consequently more dangerous." (221)*

### **Shared cycle paths**

Another pet hate is cycle paths **shared** with pedestrians.

*"Shared cycle paths - these do nothing to encourage people to cycle. In Reading they are generally no wider than a normal pavement and are dangerous to pedestrians and cyclists. Cyclists have little room to manoeuvre and pedestrians do not expect cyclists on the pavement. (The obvious exception to this is along the A33.)"*

*"Mixing pedestrians and bikes doing 15mph is a recipe for disaster. Also cyclists on the pavement don't get priority at road junctions making it just useless." (427)*

### **Poor publicity and signage**

Cycle routes are not felt to be well **publicised** and the **signage** is seen as poor.

*"Why isn't there a map of cycle routes on the Reading town council website? Why have I to contact Reading Cycle Campaign to find a route? Does this imply that it is too difficult for a novice to choose a cycle route in Reading?" (257)*

*"My cycling journeys take me to several different parts of the town, and as I am not originally from Reading I have great trouble for two reasons. One is that the cycle routes are rarely effectively signposted (the signposts I see point to destinations miles away, none say what is a mile away, which is ridiculous!) and they are so randomly dispersed around the town." (104)*

### **Better cycle training**

One or two respondents suggest that cycle training could be **improved**, for **adults** as well as for children.

*"There should be a wider cycle training provision, to also cover adults who wish to return to cycling / people who are new to the UK to encourage safe cycling on the roads not on the pavements, use of lights and reflective clothing." (393)*

### **Cycle stands/ security**

Many of the respondents who are cyclists comment that there is not enough **parking** in town for bicycles and that the cycle stands that do exist are not **secure** and are open to the elements.

*"The number one problem is security. Bikes are expensive and a genuine secure lock-up is a must. And it's impossible to find in Reading. (Bear in mind that Reading is an insurance black-spot for crime". (14)*

*"If I were to consider riding a bicycle to the station there is no secure area to leave the bicycle." (31)*

### **Cycles and public transport**

Several respondents make the point that it is extremely *difficult* to take bicycles on public transport.

*"Cycles are grudgingly tolerated on trains and grudgingly tolerated by the stations. I am resigned to the fact that if passenger numbers go up only another 10% in the mornings I will no longer be able to get my bike on a train, due to the lack of extra carriages." (389)*

*"Buses, including park and ride schemes should have provision for carrying cycles. It's not difficult or expensive. Efforts should be made to encourage train operators to carry cycles free of charge. Currently cycles are banned from popular services." (172)*

### **No Cycle Strategy?**

Some respondents claim that Reading Borough Council does not take cycling provision seriously enough. Indeed, one suggests that Reading does not even have an up-to-date Cycle Strategy.

*"It took me some time to get (RBC) to admit that they currently have no formal cycling strategy - the last strategy documents covered the period 2001-06 and is not available on the RBC website. The Local Transport Plan 2006-11 makes only passing references to cycling." (206)*

### **Walking**

Some respondents believe that provision for *walkers* in Reading can be very good.

*"The current routes through the riverside parks and from Mill Green and across the lock are very good, and I have been pleased to see better lighting and new benches along the way. My observation is that they are quite heavily used, particularly by people working in town or catching a train. I hope in this respect the council will keep up the good work." (105)*

*"Reading has a good network of walking routes but there are actual and perceived road safety and personal security issues that make many people reluctant to walk." (217)*

However, many of the points made by respondents about cycling apply equally to walking - poor *phasing* on traffic lights, no *footbridges*, poor availability of *crossings*, and *shared use* paths.

*"I walk to work in central Reading. 50 % of that journey is taken up waiting to cross at pedestrian crossings. I can't believe how long it takes for lights to change to allow pedestrians to cross. Every day, infuriated pedestrians resort to running between traffic." (103)*

*"There is no thought at all given to helping people walk or cycle into Reading from Caversham. The two bridges are very dangerous and pedestrians have to run the gauntlet of traffic between the traffic light changes at Caversham Bridge as there is no crossing for them to use from Thameside Promenade to St Peter's Hill". (94)*

*"Footways and crossings in the town centre and local areas are poor, with bad surfaces, drainage, inadequate crossings etc... Much could be done for the millions of the IDR. Half of Reading's trips are probably within a 2 mile walk." (322)*

There are also concerns that the Reading station redevelopment may remove a much-used *pedestrian route* into the town centre.

*"The station improvement will sever a vital artery for pedestrians and cyclists." (87)*

### Car free centre

More than a dozen respondents think that Reading would be enhanced if the town centre were entirely *car free*.

*"Make the centre completely car free, buses only (see Slough, Maidenhead and Bracknell main streets..." (18)*

*"Make the area inside the IDR 'essential vehicles' only." (22)*

### Personal security

A few respondents, overwhelmingly female, comment on personal *security* issues when using public transport, or walking or cycling in the town.

*"Improve lighting on paths so that it is safer to walk or cycle at night." (93)*

*"Also if there was better lighting/CCTV in Reading it would feel safer to use public transport - at present I avoid it as I do not feel safe walking by the station or waiting for buses at night." (27)*

### Green travel plans

A number of respondents mention the need for both *schools...*

*"Children should be able to walk to school - i.e. their school should be within walking distance of their home, and parents/carers should be discouraged from making unnecessary school runs." (232)*

*"It is clearly not feasible to ban vehicles on the school run selectively, but provision of a good quality school bus service and strict enforcement of parking restrictions around schools would help. ... Allow all school buses to use bus lanes (I believe some of them can't at present). (296)*

*"Schools should encourage sustainable transport (walk, bike, bus NOT car). Schools should be good enough that parents want to send their children to the local one (OK I know that's out of the scope of this enquiry)." (520)*

*"Dedicated school buses for all schools. If children are to walk to school, the walking bus idea could be used, so that children were taken to pick up points for their school and placed in the care of staff recruited for the role." (444)*

...and *businesses* to develop green travel plans.

*"If companies could be offered an incentive to their employees to encourage car sharing maybe they would think harder about enforcing it... I've heard of companies like Oracle having a pool of bikes employees can borrow or rent." (80)*

*"What work has been undertaken towards the provision of Green Transport Plans for major employee locations including shift change-over times, shelf stackers, cleaners and security staff...?" (252)*

## Other towns and countries do it better

Finally, a number of respondents believe that other countries, and indeed, other towns in the British Isles, *cope* much better with aspects of their traffic problems than Reading and that Reading could learn from them.

*"I would strongly suggest looking into Hasselt in Belgium where they made the inner ring road one way and managed to increase public transport usage by 800% overnight (1300% over 6 months). I have visited there on a research trip and would be happy to discuss with you." (1)*

*"What you may wish to consider is to have the courage to implement the simple solutions introduced in the northern Dutch town of Drachten where they removed every single traffic light. Where appropriate these were replaced by roundabouts. The result of this simple move was a dramatic improvement in traffic flow (to the point where jams all but disappeared) and a dramatic reduction in accidents." (111)*

*"I used to live in Stuttgart in Germany... the public transport was excellent - well planned, well used and properly invested in... In addition, the separate forms of transport are linked up (trains, S and U Bahns and buses) very well." (153)*

*"I used to live in Dublin and transport there is much cheaper and better used" (283)*

*"Buses need more priority/segregation - no good having them stuck in the same queues as cars. Dublin seems to work well where buses whizz past queues of stationary traffic." (429)*

*"In some towns and cities in the USA and Canada parking in such areas is controlled by allowing cars and light vans to park on one side of the road only; one side on even calendar days and the other on odd calendar days. This ensures that at least one and usually two ways are free of obstacles allowing free movement of traffic. The rules are rigorously enforced, offending vehicles being towed away and impounded." (316)*

*"Look at Oxford - fantastic Park and Ride out of town, regular buses, moderate fares and cars completely removed from anywhere near the town centre." (9)*

*"Have a look at the facilities that the town of Norwich provides. They even have toilets at their park and ride". (308)*

*"I've looked at Aylesbury which is a "Cycling Demonstration Town" and receives additional funding for this. The segregated cycleways send out a very clear message when the cycleway is empty and the road is jammed solid." (256)*

*"Look at High Wycombe's new bus shelter which is modern... and promotes sustainable transport." (9)*

*"However, what a pleasure it is to travel in and around Basingstoke as with many other towns" (79).*

*"In Birmingham near Spaghetti Junction the road has variable direction lanes in the centre, controlled by red or green lights on a gantry over the road. This could help the IDR at certain times, e.g. Vastern Road." (443)*

*"Look at Slough and the A4 linked lights system. Drive at 25-30mph and you hit all three green lights..." (281)*

### 'Common Sense' Party Questionnaire

The Commission has received 152 questionnaires that were solicited by the Common Sense Party (28% of all submissions). This questionnaire posed a series of leading questions, prompting yes/no answers to a number of often complex issues.

- "Do you think *bus fares* should be set at a level to attract customers? e.g. £1 or 50p a ride." 144 respondents agreed, 7 disagreed and 1 failed to answer.
- "Do you think *train fares* are expensive?" 133 respondents agreed, 13 disagreed and 1 was unsure.
- "Would you like to see *new roads* built?" suggesting a cross town route from Vastern Road to the A329, a 3rd bridge and an outer ring road. It is difficult to assess whether the 133 respondents who voted in favour agreed with all three suggested road measures. 17 respondents were opposed to any new roads and 2 were unsure/didn't know or failed to answer.
- "Is closing *Cow Lane* (for good) even for pedestrians and cyclists a good idea?" This question fails to explain that an alternative route is planned with a bridge under the railway line at Scours Lane. The results - 128 respondents opposed, 17 in favour, 6 unsure/didn't know or failed to answer - have to be understood in this context.
- "Is your choice of transport influenced by concerns for *personal safety*?" Here 77 respondents said yes, 71 no, and 4 were unsure/didn't know or failed to answer. As most respondents identified that they use more than one mode of transport it is difficult to extrapolate which modes of transport are felt to be particularly unsafe.
- 79 respondents were in favour to the '£515 million' *railway scheme* for Reading, 52 were opposed and 19 were unsure/didn't know or failed to answer.
- 144 respondents were opposed to the *one-way IDR*, 5 were unsure/didn't know or failed to answer and 3 were in favour.
- 142 respondents were opposed to "the proposal to close the southern slip roads that link *Chatham Street* roundabout to the IDR", 5 were in favour and 5 were unsure/didn't know or failed to answer.
- 129 respondents were opposed to *road charging*, 22 were in favour and 1 didn't know.
- 143 respondents felt that "RBC has created *traffic problems* e.g. A33 RKL junction, bus stops, too many bus lanes?" 5 disagreed and 4 were unsure/didn't know or failed to answer.