

Bloomsbury Residents' Action Group

**BRAG**

**Residents matter!**

**Presentation by BRAG members**

Tuesday 4 October 2016

7.00pm

St Pancras Church, Euston Road, NW1

# Introduction

Nicky Coates (Chair of BRAG)

# BRAG's Public Meeting, 7pm 4 October 2016

## AGENDA

BRAG – how it started

Community Planning Day – involving local people

The Tavistock-Torrington trial

The flawed consultation process

BRAG's alternative plan - there are other options

Q&A

Next steps

# Introduction

I am delighted to welcome so many people here this evening to this BRAG meeting.

Firstly, to introduce myself. I am Nicky Coates, Chair of BRAG, Bloomsbury Residents' Action Group.

I think the number of people here indicates a great sense of care for our local community and a high level of concern for what has been happening recently in our neighbourhood, and also about what we fear might be still to come. I hope this evening we shall have a very constructive dialogue about what has been going wrong and what we all think would put things right.



To explain our agenda for the meeting:

- I shall start by explaining a little about how and why BRAG was set up;
- we will explain how our core principle that residents matter led us to run a community planning day and we will report what came out of that;
- we shall be looking at the profound and worrying impact of the Tavistock-Torrington trial;
- we want to shine a spotlight on the consultation process – which has been variously non-existent or seriously flawed;
- and we want to say loud and clear that the options that the Council are offering us are simply unacceptable and that there are alternative solutions to this – and we have one to present to you this evening.
- and then we want to find out what you think; there will be plenty of time for questions and comments,
- and finally we shall talk about next steps – that is, what we will do with the outcome of this evening and how we will make representations to the Council.

# BRAG – How it started

Nicky Coates



# **So what is BRAG - Bloomsbury Residents' Action Group.**

## **Why was it started?**

I woke up one morning in November last year to find my street looking like this. I thought there must be an accident or big hold up somewhere but when it persisted, and I heard someone say it was like that because of the introduction of a one way system on Tavistock Place, I phoned the Council and they said it would be like that for two weeks until the road works on Tavistock had finished. And that was just the beginning of the misinformation.

I started to find out that this was a one year trial of a one-way traffic system on Tavistock Place.

I read in the Camden New Journal that Town Hall Transport Chief Cllr Phil Jones, who we understand is going to be weighing up all the evidence for and against the scheme during this experimental year, said he was delighted by the scheme.

And in the meantime we were drowning in diesel fumes, with up to 10 hours of stationary traffic outside our windows, unable to get around our own neighbourhood and seeing emergency vehicles being held up; and cyclists and pedestrians risking their lives on the surrounding streets on to which all the west-bound traffic had been displaced.

I – like many of us- knew nothing about this in advance. I heard of someone who received an information leaflet. There was no consultation. At all. And this was not an oversight; it was deliberate.

The Tavistock Place Trial was introduced as an edict from Camden Council. It was imposed by means of an Experimental Traffic Order so that residents did not have to be consulted. In March of this year, Camden and TfL then put forward 5 further traffic schemes on which they said they had consulted. Few of the founder members of BRAG received the consultation papers; many people only heard about it by word of mouth. The Council held a meeting in March when it was clear that most people there were appalled by what was happening but it engendered very little confidence that residents' views would be heard and it seemed that their views were irrelevant to the decisions being made. Indeed, the council describes South Camden as a “business and commercial area” in contrast to “residential areas” in the north. The many thousands of residents south of Euston Road are ignored.

So we decided to set up BRAG to try to give residents a voice



And as we gathered support we found out that hundreds of other people felt the same way. And we have realised the tentacle effects of this ill-considered scheme are being felt far and wide – from Gray's Inn Road to Fitzrovia. Our inaugural meeting was only on 26<sup>th</sup> May but since then nearly 900 people have offered support by joining BRAG, writing a Comment, signing our Petition or attending the Community Planning Day. Over 750 respondents live locally or run a small business in the area.

We have been in contact with numerous local organisations: RNIB, UCH, the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority, the Bedford Estate, the Bloomsbury Association, Marchmont Association, many hotels including the Tavistock, Royal National and Imperial, Camden Cyclists, the Licensed Taxi Drivers Association and many residents associations. We have written to Camden New Journal and had meetings with council officers and members and with our MP.

I want to make it clear that BRAG is on the side of residents only. We are not for or against pedestrians, cyclists or motorists. Indeed, amongst our membership we are probably all pedestrians, and many of us are cyclists and motorists; some of have disabilities; some of us need taxis and any of us might need emergency services. We believe in all groups being accorded courtesy and respect and that we should share this crowded city space in as fair a way as possible for the benefit of everyone.

So we are delighted and grateful to see so many neighbours here this evening. Please sign our petition before you go – we have hard copies here and it is also online.

Before we go on to the Tavistock trial we just wanted to illustrate briefly one way in which we have tried to consult and involve the local community. On 8<sup>th</sup> September we held a Community Planning Day, and Debbie will explain a bit about how

# Community Planning Day

- Involving local people

Debbie Radcliffe



# Community Planning Day

Hello, I'm Debbie Radcliffe and a long term resident of the area. When I moved to Judd Street in 1981, the old ladies who lived next door – who had lived there since the 1930s – shook my hand and said, “welcome to the village”.

And this is why the area is so important to me – it is STILL a village, a community where people know each other, and care about each other.

It is really important to me – and to my neighbours – that “residents matter.”

Which is why we organised a community planning day – to make sure the Council realise that residents matter, and to provide a way for people to have their say.

The Community Planning Day took place on Thursday 8 September 2016, from 1pm to 8.30pm. The event was held in Café Thenga, on the ground floor of One KX, a community venue run by the YMCA on the corner of Judd Street and Cromer Street. The aim of the event was to listen to local people's concerns and aspirations.

There were several ways in which people could participate:

- a post-it workshop, during which issues and aspirations were written by participants on post-it notes. These were read out by the independent facilitator (Nick Taylor, Investment Manager of Scarborough Borough Council), discussed and organised into categories. 156 post-its were subsequently typed up.
- Discussions in smaller groups. These were facilitated by Nick Taylor, with help from John Russell, a transport engineer who works for a local business and offered his assistance
- Individual conversations
- Written contributions on "Comment Sheets". 32 were received.

Although the impact of the Tavistock Place trial scheme was a key issue, a number of other concerns were raised in regard to the environment and public realm, housing & foreign property owners, safety & security, community cohesion and criticism of Camden's consultation process.

# Process: Post-it Workshop



156 post-its were typed up



# Process: A day for listening





# Process: smaller discussion groups



: 'Street Tolerance (getting around)



2: The Optimists (sustainability)



3: Who is it for? (impact on local traders)



Reporting Back



## Process: Filling in Comments Sheets [32 received]



All Comments to be included in our report

## What did people say?

*“Do they want everyone to move out of central London?”*

*“If people can’t live ordinary lives here, they will leave. Then houses will be bought up by absentee landlords leading to a loss of community.”*

*“We need to see the area as a whole.”*

*“Local businesses are important. They help to keep the community vibrant.”*

*“There’s a feeling of powerlessness in the face of the Council and TfL steam-rolling plans through.”*

*“The whole of London is traffic jammed – not just our local streets.”*

## What did people say? About getting around (a key issue)

*“You're not always going to be 25 and able to walk and cycle. And any minute you could be run over by Uber and be unable to walk.”*

*“Black cabs pick up children to take them to GOSH, we're often getting people to hospital.”*

*“It feels as though cyclists have been given a law to themselves, they're now the elite - the untouchables.”*

*“I'm not very sympathetic to cars. I used to cycle in the past but haven't had the guts to do so in London.”*

*“Judd Street pedestrianised? That would be Utopia.... Though there'd maybe have to be a barrier to let commercial and delivery vehicles come along the street.”*

*“The cycle scheme is being blamed for everything!”*



## BRAG COMMUNITY PLANNING DAY

Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2016, at OneKX, corner Judd Street & Cromer Street, London WC1H 8BS

### An elderly resident's view

#### COMMENTS SHEET

PLEASE LET US KNOW ANY COMMENTS, CONCERNS AND IDEAS

	Address	Postcode	Tel no / Email
Robert McDonald	177 O'Donnell St	WC1N 1AQ	

Since Tavistock place trial, the traffic in all surrounding areas have become gridlocked, the pollution and noise has become unbearable. My once so lovely Bloomsbury has now become a health hazard. I am 83 years old and I used to sit on the Brunswick Stairs outside the Cinema for hours after my walk with my dog watching the world go by. I can no longer do that as the fumes from the traffic in Brunswick Square/Hunter Street is no good for my health, so I have to go up to my flat with my windows shut. I feel now I am a prisoner in my own neighbourhood. Please take notice of your local residents and put Tavistock place back to how it was when it was a pleasant place to live and walk in.





Over 70 local residents & businesses contributed to BRAG's community planning process

## Who participated?

### **Residents & local businesses from:**

Argyle Square  
Bridgeway Street  
Brunswick Centre (Foundling Court & O'Donnell Court)  
Coram Street (Witley Court)  
Cranleigh Street  
Crestfield Street  
Endsleigh Place (Tavistock Court)  
Endsleigh Street (Winston House)  
Frederick Street  
Gray's Inn Road  
Judd Street (inc. Medway Court, Jessel House, Clare Court, QAM)  
Leigh Street  
Marchmont Street (Upper & Lower)  
Montague Street (Rodmell)  
Regent Square  
Sandwich Street (Sinclair House, Sandwich House)  
Swinton Street  
Tavistock Place  
Thanet Street (inc. Rashleigh House)

**Representatives from  
Camden Cyclists  
&  
London Taxi Driver  
Association (LTDA)**

# The Tavistock-Torrington trial

Nicky Coates

# The Tavistock – Torrington Trial Scheme

Its aim was to:

- a safer and more attractive cycling route
- a more pleasant environment for pedestrians
- improved air quality
- and streets that are easier to cross
- part of the 'West End Project' – to reduce anticipated impact of through traffic on local residents in Torrington Place

(In case you are not aware, the West End Project will make Gower Street two-way traffic with 2 cycle lanes; and Tottenham Court Road will be for buses, cycles and pedestrians only. We were not consulted about this at all – and yet the fall-out from this is going to be massive for us).

The day the trial started, congestion, pollution and increased dangers for cyclists and pedestrians rocketed in innumerable surrounding streets. Streets which had been pleasant, shared spaces which worked for all road users and pedestrians reasonably well were now choked with fumes, and gridlocked with angry drivers, and hazardous for everyone.



# Congestion: impact on motor vehicles and cyclists



Hunter Street / Handel Street



Judd Street



Same time, different streets  
21 January 2016 1.25pm – 1.30pm



Judd Street



Tavistock Place

What happened was simply that the traffic which used to go west-bound on Tavistock and Torrington was displaced to the surrounding streets.

It may be a safer and more attractive route for cyclists and pedestrians using Tavistock Place, but for other cyclists and pedestrians using streets in the surrounding neighbourhood, life has become much less safe.

In short, this is the impact of the Tavistock-Torrington trial:

- displaced traffic causing widespread congestion
- the congestion causes hours of idling traffic and associated increased pollution
- older and disabled people are finding it increasingly difficult – and more expensive – to move around the area
- emergency vehicles are having to travel circuitous routes and are taking longer to reach emergencies
- local businesses are having deliveries significantly delayed

Southampton Row and Guilford Street are now frequently gridlocked. If the closure of Judd Street is implemented all the traffic now stationary on Judd Street will add to the congestion on Southampton Row and Guilford Street. Very slow moving traffic is far more polluting than flowing traffic.



Temporary pollution monitors were installed on Tavistock Place – presumably because the Council knew that pollution would inevitably be reduced there – and, unsurprisingly, the findings are indeed that pollution has reduced on Tavistock Place. But other streets have NOT been monitored. These are the streets to which traffic has been displaced because of the trial, and is clear that pollution here will have been increased.

And there has been a widespread impact on people with health and mobility problems. Someone who has mobility problems wrote to the CNJ and said she has to use taxis and journeys that used to cost £10 now cost £40.

At the Marchmont Association meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> September there were many worries expressed about access for disabled people. People in wheelchairs can no longer be set down outside the Tavistock Hotel. What was the Council's solution? To drop them across the road or round the corner on the next street.

And that takes me to possibly the most worrying impact of the Tavistock trial – this change – and there are more proposed changes (eg blocking off vehicle access between Judd Street and Euston Rd and also blocking off access between Brunswick Square and Lansdowne terrace) is that these are all part of the designated routes for emergency vehicles.

We live in an area where there have been two terrorist attacks. We have 3 major stations, one international, and three major hospitals. Emergency vehicles need to be able to travel freely and fast in this area. They now often have to go much longer routes to get to the same place – and this will get worse if the additional changes are brought in. And we have seen police cars, fire engines and ambulances being slowed down, or being forced to drive at high speed on the wrong side of the road in the face of oncoming traffic and cyclists.

Safety is the key issue. Residents need to be safe from pollution and emergency services need fast access to the area.

And finally, there are the local businesses.

One local shop reported deliveries being delayed by an hour and half.

A hotel in Cartwright Gardens said deliveries were being delayed and even cancelled.

A local cafe owner said business had gone down.

So, in short we think the Tavistock trial is a failure and should be abandoned - and we should be looking for other solutions.

And we do have another solution to show you.

# BRAG's alternative plan

- there are other options

Mark Foley

## Presentation by Mark Foley

I am a cyclist and a long-time resident of Bloomsbury. From the mid-1980s until recently I cycled every day from my home in Judd Street, along Tavistock Place, to work in Oxford Street, so I am very familiar with the local streets and cycle lanes.

The Camden consultation presented us with a choice of two alternatives, the trial scheme or the previous scheme with a two-way segregated cycle track on the north side of Tavistock Place [slide 1] as if these were the only options.



**Slide 1: Tavistock Place 2005 - 2015**



In fact, the previous cycle scheme was only installed in 2005 and replaced an earlier cycle track scheme which had been in existence for many years. This earlier layout can be seen in aerial photographs of Tavistock Place dating from 1999 and 2003 [slides 2 & 3].

I and many other local cyclists (and members of BRAG) remember this scheme as working very well. It consisted of two cycle tracks painted green, one on the north, one on the south side, with white lines separating them from motor traffic.

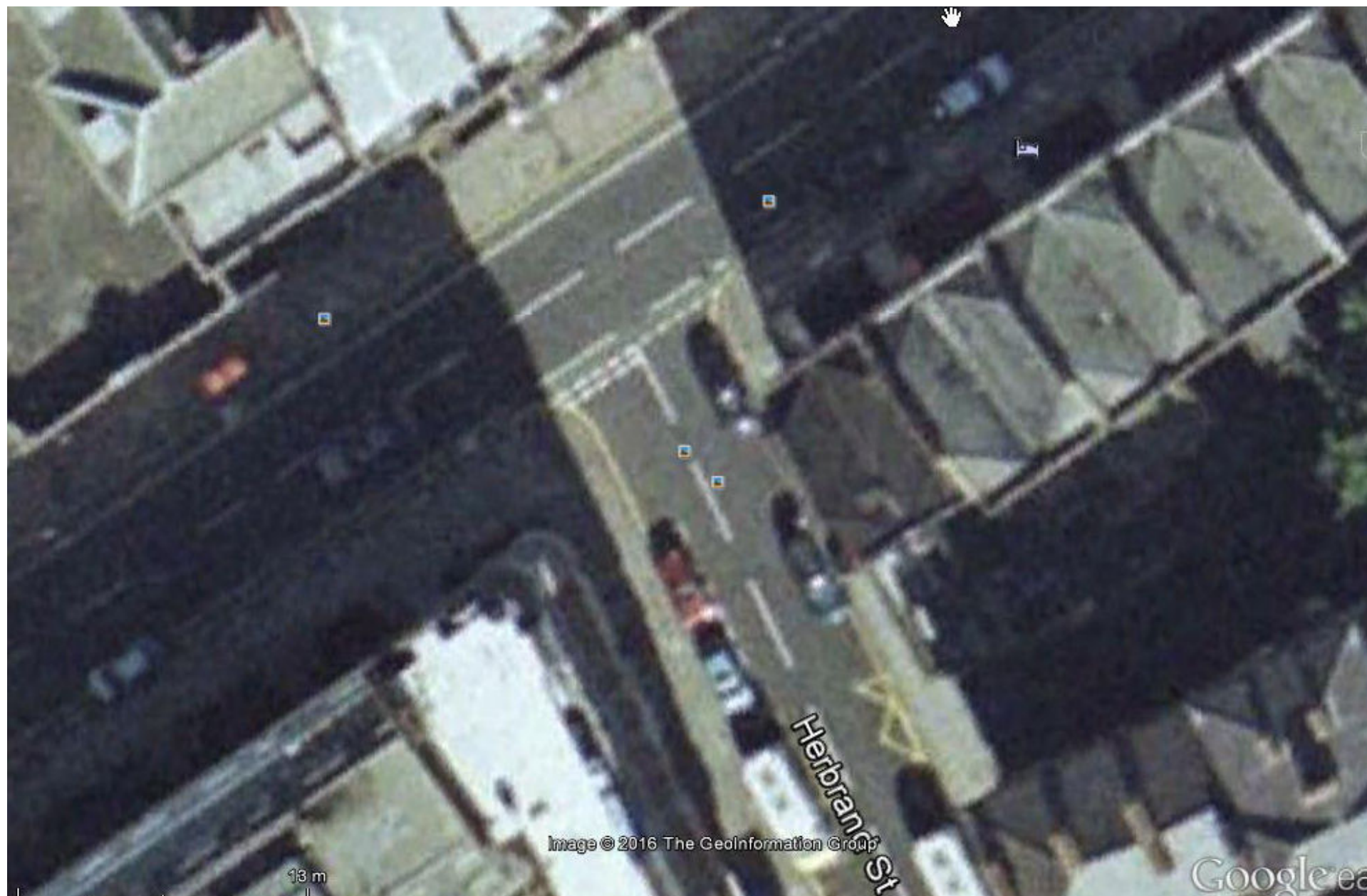
When the earlier scheme was ripped up and the segregated two-way scheme was constructed in 2004 local residents were alarmed and expressed concern but they were not informed or consulted.

I personally used the earlier cycle tracks on an almost daily basis over many years and found them safe, comfortable and convenient. I did not witness any accidents and as the cycle flows matched the movement of vehicles, pedestrians had no confusion or difficulties crossing the roads.



**Slide 2: Tavistock Place 1999**  
(Junction Hunter-Judd)





**Slide 3: Tavistock Place 2003**  
**(Junction Herbrand Street)**

As many members of BRAG (including cyclists and those with reduced mobility) remembered the pre-2005 road layout as being safe and effective we decided to develop an alternative scheme based on this rather than the discredited segregated two-way cycle track built in 2005.

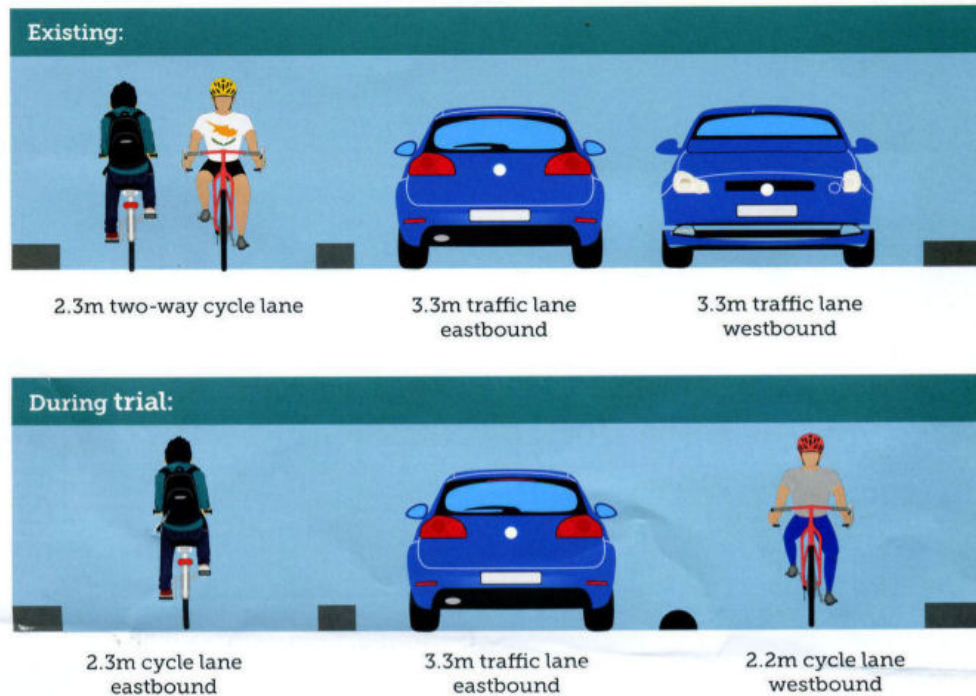
Of course, the pre-2005 scheme dates from a time before the introduction of the Congestion Charge, when there was more motor traffic (including lorries) in central London and fewer cyclists. This was reflected in the rather narrow cycle lanes and the generous space given over to motor traffic. But we felt there was sufficient space to redress this imbalance and set about measuring the road widths along the route.

We also had meetings with members of Camden Cyclists Campaign to ascertain the cycle lane widths they favoured. We found there was sufficient space to provide generous cycle lanes by reducing the space given over to traffic lanes.

We also sought the advice of a professional road engineer to confirm that our suggestions met all legal requirements. Our scheme proposes two cycle lanes, one on each side of the street, similar to the pre-2005 layout but with much more space reserved for cycle lanes.

Using the graphics from Camden's leaflet introducing the trial scheme, I have prepared a cross section showing our proposals and comparing them with the previous (post 2005) scheme and the trial layout [slide 4].

The diagram below shows the existing and trial road layout on Torrington Place / Tavistock Place.



The widths given above are average widths, and vary along the route due to the space available.

### ***BRAG proposal***



## Slide 5: BRAG cycle lane proposal

In the event that some people might think that our proposal is unworkable or unusual, I can show that this type of layout is common throughout the country, including many parts of London. In fact, it exists and is working very well elsewhere in WC1.

This photograph [slide 5] shows a similar layout on a main road just a couple of blocks to the east of Tavistock Place – Kings Cross Road.





## Slide 6: Kings Cross Road Cycle Lanes



# BRAG's alternative plan

- there are other options

Tony Harrison

## Presentation by Tony Harrison

Good Evening. My name is Tony Harrison. I have been a resident of Thanet Street since 1977. I am also a pedestrian and ex-cyclist. As a resident I am very unhappy with the way in which our area is being transformed by the hijacking of valuable street space for exclusive use by cyclists, both local and those passing through, and with the impacts on other road users.

I am not a member of BRAG, but I have been invited to advise and assist them because of my 40 plus years as an Architect Planner and relevant experience on numerous Master Plans and Local Plans, working closely with all disciplines including Traffic Engineering. Two built and successful projects that I was consulted on and deeply involved in were:

- The South Bank and Upper Ground Regeneration project in which I was responsible for traffic calming, landscape and streetscape improvements, and
- The Royal Parks Traffic Calming Project that included measures to improve traffic conditions in Regents Park, Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, and traffic circulation around the Victoria Memorial in front of Buckingham Palace.

Wearing my old professional hat, I have a lot of sympathy with Camden's objectives and for the external pressures on them – safer streets and environmental improvements etc. But where I would differ with them is their flawed and short-sighted strategies which appear to solve local problems here and there, but which exacerbate and multiply problems elsewhere.

Understandably, these failures give rise to questions of competence in Camden's apparently uncoordinated reactive interventions in traffic flows, their claims of limited available options, and the lack of consistency in their strategic thinking.

The alternative reality is that there **is** a coordinated master plan being rolled out, by stealth, that is very effective in minimising residents' ability to respond to it. In short, a drive to connect up the dotted lines of the Cycle Superhighway network that will include Tavistock Place, Regent Square, Judd Street and Midland Road etc. etc. etc.

I am happy to discuss any or all of these opinions later in our open debate, but for now, I have examined Camden's consultation document and carried out my own check measurements at the narrowest sections of the trial route.

As a result, I am able to endorse Mark's analysis and views on BRAG's alternative plan, one that is workable and perfectly adequate for all existing road users, and which for the most part comfortably exceeds minimum standards for cyclists and pedestrians, but less so for motor vehicles.

The one pinch point that would need to be and can be satisfactorily addressed, with a little imagination and flexibility by all interest groups, is outside Frank Harris's shop at the Marchmont Street/Tavistock Place junction.

This is the narrowest part of the trial route, but even here it still exceeds the absolute minimum to maintain east and west movements for all modes of traffic.

Pedestrians and cyclists can squabble over who is more deserving of its allocation, but as a professional, I would give it to the cyclists in order to provide them with separated east and west lanes, desirable but not essential.

In passing, on a related issue and a good example of Camden's reactive interventions, I am compelled to comment on the movement restriction introduced here in 2011 following a pedestrian fatality. This prevented northbound turns into Marchmont Street from Tavistock Place resulting in taxis and commercial vehicles heading towards KX being diverted onto Judd Street before doubling back onto Cartwright Gardens and Mabledon Place via Leigh Street, Hastings Street and others. So, since 2011 there has already been significant additional traffic on Judd Street, which barely coped with it until the current additional diversions, when it became overloaded and in short, clogged at critical times of the day and night.

This traffic turn should never have been closed, and with changes to its geometry and surfacing, improved pedestrian safety was and remains available. It should be reopened to restore better access to KX station.

In addition, the Tavistock Place trial in its current configuration is unjustified, unnecessary and should not be made permanent.

The BRAG proposal offers a better alternative for all users, and without the controversial negative impacts on the wider area.

# The flawed consultation

Nicky Coates



## **The flawed consultation process**

Before the trial, Camden Council consulted, according to the document they published last November: Transport for London, Camden Cycling Campaign, London Cycling Campaign, Living Streets, University College London and the University of London

In short, they consulted organisations they thought would like it. There is a conspicuous absence of residents in that list – and yet we are the people who have to live with the consequences – and who have to pay for it.

Imposing the one-way system by Experimental Traffic Order meant that legally they did not have to consult residents.

The Council's consultation document is now out – with the consultation closing on 21<sup>st</sup> October. If you haven't seen it yet google Camden/Tavistock/consultation.

But the process has been very flawed

The consultation document was supposed to go to every council tax payer. It has not. It has gone to some – a straw poll of my immediate neighbourhood suggested about half. But it may be much less than that as we understand some mansion blocks were not mailed.

The Council put up posters about the consultation in Tavistock Place – where I presume they thought people would like the one-way system – but not in the surrounding streets where they know people don't like it. After there was some protest about this, some posters have now gone up elsewhere – at least I have seen one.

The way in which the consultation document is written is I think biased. The before picture they have used is dull and grey – and the after picture bright and sunny. And this is not an accident because if you look at the pictures closely, they are the same basic photo which has been digitally changed – with sunshine added in the after picture.

The document is entitled: 'Proposed improvement for walking and cycling'. It could equally well be headed: 'Proposal to close some roads and move all the traffic on to surrounding residential streets' – but it isn't.

# The Consultation Document

BEFORE



PROPOSED



But worse than that, the Council only allows one choice between two options – either keep it as it is now or go back to how it was before last November. A bit like choosing between having a cold or flu. How it is now doesn't work for local residents. And how it was before last November did not work well either.

The Council offers no scope for any other alternative solutions, and it is totally confusing for anyone who wants to suggest an alternative. We pointed this out to the Council and they said that people who did not want either how it is now or how it was last year, should vote no to Q6, yes to Q7 and say in Q8 that you want other options to be considered – and if you have ideas for others options say so.

This advice is on our website.

So please. If you have not done it already, please do go to the consultation document, make your views known before 21<sup>st</sup> October – and get your neighbours to respond too.



# The consultation: how to make your views known

- 6** Would you like the current street layout (with a cycle track on each side of the street and one-way, mainly eastbound, motor traffic) to become permanent? If made permanent, improvements would be made, including wider pavements and stepped cycle tracks to replace the rubber blocks used in the trial. (Please note: you can find further details about the proposed street layout in the Related Documents section on the previous page.)

*(Required)*

- ☐ Yes  
☒ **No**  
☐ No opinion

- 7** Would you like the street to return to its pre-trial layout (two motor traffic lanes and one two-way cycle track)? (Please note: you can find further details in the Related Documents section on the previous page.)

*(Required)*

- ☒ **Yes**  
☐ No  
☐ No opinion

# The consultation: how to make your views known

8 Do you have any other comments on the proposed improvements along the Torrington Place / Tavistock Place route?

Your Views:

For example: I think the Council should consider alternatives, such as having two separate cycle lanes and two-way traffic on the Tavistock-Torrington route.

Other options to be considered are....

So, now we have time for questions and comments, and then we will allow time at the end to discuss next steps. We will finish by 9pm

And please let's keep the discussion respectful of other groups and people with different opinions.

# Q & A

Chaired by Nicky Coates with  
contributions by meeting participants



## The Q & A session

*From Councillor Rishi Madlani* (represents Labour in Bloomsbury Ward)

The Council wants to collect views widely and will give the consultation extra publicity or provide more consultation papers if residents get in touch. It would also be helpful if BRAG sought a meeting with Council officers to discuss safety and the segregation of cycle and car tracks.

The Chair responded that BRAG hopes a meeting will be arranged soon.

### Comments and questions from other participants

There was too much traffic on Judd Street even before the Torrington-Tavistock trial. 7000 vehicle movements a day – *“that’s not suitable for a village”*. There are too many cars to be safe sharing the road with cyclists. Camden Cyclists have had meetings with BRAG to try to establish areas of common ground. Instead of opposing the trial, BRAG should be supporting the Midland Road and Brunswick Square schemes, which would take traffic away from Judd Street: *“You don’t seem to have reached the right conclusion.”*

- That would solve one problem but leaves others, such as the increased journey times for ambulances going west to University College Hospital.
- BRAG’s campaign is not just about Judd Street

White lines separating cycle from car tracks are not enough. Safety requires proper segregation. *“We want people from 8 to 80 riding bicycles. I ride and I’m over 80.”*

UCLH have written to the Council about ambulance journey times to the hospital from NHNN in Queen Square and other hospitals to the east. *“Nobody in UCLH Transport was consulted.”*

Statistics were provided of extended journey times for patients being taken from one hospital to another.

*“The hospital is building world-leading facilities [the Proton Beam Cancer Therapy Centre at Grafton Street / Huntley Street] but we won’t be able to access them.”*

*“The trial should be abandoned. It’s making congestion intolerable in Endsleigh Gardens and Gower Place.”*

Children are becoming so inactive that their bones are not developing properly. We should encourage cycling. *“I’m saddened you didn’t mention children. You should be looking at the whole of the next generation.”*

Without the protection of proper segregation, children will not be allowed to cycle: *“Parents won’t let their children cycle because it’s not safe. There’s no space to have that activity.”*

The best exercise for children is to walk.

Impact of pollution on children using Coram Fields. There is published information on level of pollution affecting local schools, ie Argyle Primary, St George's in Millman Street, St Joseph's.

*"Think of the children using Coram Fields, which is the only playground in the area. They have to go down Guilford Street. GOSH is on Guilford Street – look at the level of pollution there. There's no real concern for children."*

*"Look at the state of the squares in Bloomsbury - Russell Square is jammed with coaches."*

The cyclists using the trial are from other areas, they are not residents: *"They're not from the area, and they're often not wearing helmets – which surprises me."*

London wasn't designed for this level of traffic. *"The centre of London was not designed for cyclists or to take a bus – it doesn't work."*

Concern about when the cycle tracks END: *"There's going to be a place where you come off the tracks. So what happens next?"*

*"Think of the people who live here but wouldn't cycle and don't have a car."*

The Council should have considered what would happen to the displaced traffic. East-west journeys were not considered, especially journeys between hospitals.

*“I’m a carer and I have to take a patient from the Neurological hospital in Queens Square to UCLH. Now I have to go via the overcrowded Euston Road or along the Strand. We need to be able to go west.”*

BRAG should be campaigning to reduce through traffic and for higher congestion charges.

*“The reason people don’t cycle is that it’s not safe to cycle. There’s only one to get people to cycle and that’s by having segregation.”*

The trial should be judged according to whether it has met its objectives. No data on cycle or pedestrian safety has been collected, even though safety is used to justify the trial. Why was a trial devised which could not be tested? This is poor policy-making.

*“One objective is ‘we want to increase cycle safety’. But Camden doesn’t know the answer. They haven’t demonstrated at all that pedestrian safety has improved.”*

Traffic planners should look at all the uses being made of roads – delivering meals on wheels and medicines, for example.

There has been no analysis of loading and unloading needs in Tavistock Place.



The School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine in Tavistock Place submitted a planning application, which was granted, to develop their premises in Tavistock Place. This included a reference to S106 money to Camden to pay for the new cycle lanes. This was before the trial started.

Not all cyclists are in favour of segregation. *“As a cyclist I am completely against the scheme. I feel less safe in the cycle lanes because cyclists are not trained to cycle safely.”*

The main cyclists' deaths are in Holborn – *“you can see the ghost (white) cycles there”* - and involve HGVs, not in Tavistock Place and not involving cars.

*“I don't think the barriers make it safe for cyclists.”*

Any new scheme has to settle down. Congestion is making traffic slower than in pre-congestion charge days. This will stop people using cars.

There are simply too many vehicles. There is gridlock all over London, not just in the centre of the city. *“The gridlock from the Thames to Finchley is ridiculous.”*

The scheme favours commuters: *“I commute daily from West Hampstead. I'm a supporter of cycle infrastructure, eg CS11, the TaviPlace trial – it makes it great for people commuting.”*

*“The infrastructure is evolving over time. The important thing is linking it up to the rest of London. We need to create a modal shift.”*

The Torrington – Tavistock trial impacts on residents beyond Gray's Inn Road and they should be consulted too. *"Gray's Inn Road is incredibly choked by cars."*

- They can be, via the online consultation

The cycle lanes are too wide and we don't need them on both sides of the road. Even on the embankment they are only on one side.

*"Too much space is being taken up for cycling. You don't need two thirds of the road to do it. Why can't the lane be on just one side of the road?"*

This area is becoming a no-go area for people not on bikes. People have to get out of cars and there is nowhere to stop. *"At some point, you do need to be able to get in and out of a car."*

Hunter Street is also congested. So long as Torrington-Tavistock Place is one way, traffic has to go up Judd Street or down Hunter Street.

*"I live in Hunter Street which is suffering from the increased traffic. The one-way street is a bit of a disaster....I'm delighted to have found out about BRAG."*

The loss of a route to the west is very frustrating. People do drive and a solution has to be found.

*“We have to come up with a solution for everyone. I really hope the Council will listen to that.”*

The two-way cycle track was extremely dangerous.

Through car traffic is a problem but so is through cycling – increased speed and danger

Strangers don't know the roads or where and when cyclists will come off the lanes.

Too many cyclists don't know how to cycle safely.

The solution is to remove all traffic controls and force traffic to slow down.

- The Council have not been able to estimate the volume of through traffic.

The lack of a westbound route is the real problem. Switching the direction of car traffic in Tavistock Place would solve the problem.

*“Re-think the whole thing. Make the one way route westbound.”*

*“We’re concentrating on one little bit - Tavistock Place – but the problem is the whole issue of traffic. There is too much non-essential traffic. It’s a Greater London issue and we need much more joined-up London thinking.”*

*“We’re being very parochial. If you stop traffic here, it will just move from one place to another.”*

*“It’s a wider issue. Why is the car God? Long live the car!”*

*“It ain’t simple, we should get a horse!”*

*“We need to look at alternatives.”*

# Next Steps

Nicky Coates



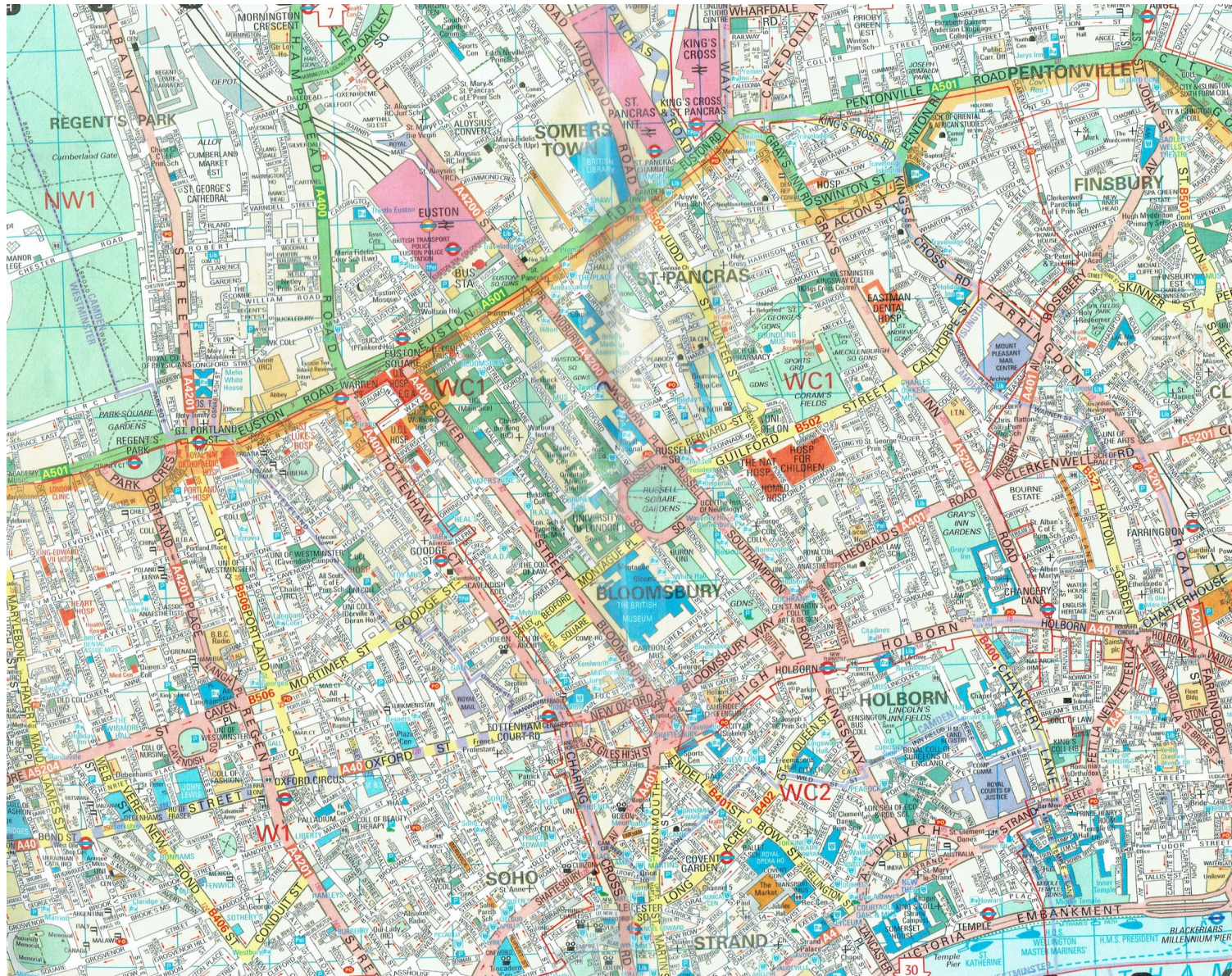
## Next steps

Nicky Coates said tonight's meeting would be reported back to the Council, as part of BRAG's response to the Tavistock / Torrington Place consultation. As such, it would be useful to test the views of attendees, in order to be able to include this in the report. She asked for a show of hands to indicate how many people would like Camden Council to consider BRAG's plan for two-way traffic and two cycle lanes as an alternative scheme for the Tavistock-Torrington corridor. 41 people voted in favour of this; 3 people voted to keep the trial layout.

Nicky Coates thanked those attending for giving up their time and for sharing their ideas and comments, and undertook to ensure that a report of the meeting would be posted on the BRAG website.

*[Signing in sheets indicated a total of 76 people attended the meeting, some of whom left before the end. 3 non-attendees specifically asked to be included in the attendance list, as supporters of BRAG, which would increase the number to 79.]*





Central London – a residential area