

AN OPEN LETTER TO BATH COUNCILLORS

Dear Councillors of Bath,

Next week you will make one of the most important decisions of your career. We all know how bad the traffic in Bath is. We all know that we need a solution. But building a Park & Ride on Bathampton Meadows is not it. The evidence is clear. Don't make this your legacy.

You didn't promise in your manifesto to build a Park & Ride in the east. You promised to consult on a site. You did consult, and 51% of us said no. Since then, 13,000 of us have signed a petition calling on you not to go ahead.

What you did promise in your manifesto was that the people of Bath would begin to see a 'real improvement' in the city's transport system by 2020. Maybe you can still achieve this. But not if you build another Park & Ride. The council itself admitted in its evidence to the national planning inspector last September that it won't make any difference to congestion or pollution. And your own consultants have said it will reduce traffic by just 5%, not by 2020 as you promised, but by 2029, nine years later, and then only in the mornings. £10 million is a lot of public money to spend for so little benefit.

We told you back in February that the Park & Rides that Bath already has are rarely more than half full. And you have at last acknowledged that. So why build another one? In recent years, £4.5 million has been spent expanding the Park & Rides, but since planning permission was granted in 2009, actual usage has fallen by an average of 125 cars a day.

So instead of building yet another Park & Ride, and destroying one of the most beautiful areas of our city, let's work together to research why people are travelling in their cars and find a solution to get them out of them; let's look at the impact of the school run and how we can make public transport more affordable. Let's give people alternatives like cycle routes and improved bus services from Wiltshire. Let's work together to make Bath a better place to live and work, now and in the future.

The Bathampton Meadows Alliance