



BBRAG NEWS

Bromley Borough Roads Action Group - No. 22 (June 2003)

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Editorial

More articles than ever in this edition, so no room for me to waffle here. But don't forget to send in your comments or questions.

Roger Lawson, Editor

Mayor Opposes Speed Humps!



London Mayor Ken Livingstone has recently published a draft "London Ambient Noise Strategy". This covers noise from transport and industry in London, and how it might be reduced.

Some interesting statements in this document are the following:

"Local highway authorities need to consider alternatives to the road hump.....Traffic calming has reduced accidents, but the wrong sort of road hump can increase noise. Design and spacing can be optimised. Heavy vehicles, especially unladen lorries with older suspension systems, can generate annoying noise, particularly over flat-topped humps. Traffic cushions (ie. split humps) in theory allow heavy vehicles, including buses, to avoid the hump, while still reducing car speeds. In practice, kerbside car parking and manoeuvring problems can prevent buses and other heavy vehicles from avoiding the cushion. Humps and cushions need to be designed to avoid ground-borne vibration....."

(Editors Comment: So finally people are recognising the reality of life with speed humps, but changing the design or spacing will not help much).

Many of the other proposed policies in this document are also sensible. For example he opposes night flights over London, he is in favour of reducing bus noise (possibly by using hybrid-electric or fuel cell powered buses) and he suggests using quieter road surfacing materials.

You can obtain a full copy of this document and a consultation form from the following web site: <http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/strategies/noise/index.jsp> or write to the Mayor of London, Ambient Noise Strategy Consultation, Greater London Authority, FREEPOST 15799, London SE1 2BR. Comments must be in by 13th of June.

Incidentally noise control is the responsibility of the local authority, not the police, so if you are disturbed by noisy neighbours, by false burglar alarms or other nuisances, the following are the numbers to call in Bromley: 020-8313-4830 (office hours), 020-8464-4848 (other times).

Aquila Site Redevelopment



The redevelopment of the ex-MOD site called Aquila in Bickley has been covered in previous newsletters and a note was circulated to members on this subject recently. There has been a revised planning application for 212 dwellings (as opposed to the original 280). However both BBRAG and local residents still feel that the proposals are unacceptable on the following grounds:

- Additional traffic congestion, particularly at the Barfield Road/Blackbrook Lane junction pictured above, will be a major problem. This junction and surrounding roads, including the A222, already have long queues of traffic during rush hours, leading to excessive pollution, noise and delays for local residents.
- The density of housing will still be much higher than surrounding roads, which is contrary to the UDP.

BBRAG and local residents would like to see lower density housing and more mixed use, including provision of shops, medical services and other facilities. Ideally there should also be improved site access.

(Editors Comments: This is another typical example of how major developments can be proposed when the road infrastructure is totally inadequate to cope with them. There was nothing in the planning application to improve site access, and little to improve the congestion that would result on surrounding roads. I am opposed to all additional developments anywhere near the A222 Sidcup/Bromley route until some way can be found to enhance that route. Unfortunately the existing planning system and laws make it very difficult to get such proposals rejected at the end of the day).

Second Cycle Lane in Green Lane?

Not content with retaining the existing cycle lane in Green Lane, Chislehurst, contrary to the wishes of residents, council staff are now proposing a second lane on the other side of the road.

(Editors Comments: Another triumph of dogma over reality, as there simply is not room for another cycle lane. It will not improve road safety and is simply a waste of taxpayer's money. It's just making a bad job even worse. It's also another poke in the eye for democracy in Bromley as residents voted 24 to 9 against the first cycle lane. Another example where "consultation" means very little.

As Winston Churchill said in 1947 - One can always consult a man and ask him:" Would you like your head cut off tomorrow?" And after he has said: "I would rather not", cut it off. Consultation is a vague and elastic term, particularly in Bromley).

Old Hill Humps

Well the speed humps have finally arrived in Old Hill, Chislehurst. Originally these were requested by local residents, but at the end of the day were implemented because the developers of 39 Old Hill agreed to pay for them. Incidentally this development is on a dangerous bend and originally the planning application was thrown out by Bromley Council Planning Committee, but was allowed on appeal to the Planning Inspectorate.

(Editors Comment: Yet another planning system failure where a major new development with an exit onto a hazardous blind bend has been permitted).

The scheme consists of a speed table and 6 sets of split humps. BBRAG has always opposed this traffic calming scheme, except for the speed table at the junction with Brenchley Close.

The way the two humps on the lower part of the hill have been implemented appears to be particularly dangerous, with only a single “cushion” in the centre of the road, and in one case white hatching lines to encourage you to drive down the centre of the road! Having such a design on a narrow road, where it is only possible to see a limited distance around the bend in the road seems particularly inept. Clearly larger vehicles, such as LGVs will drive down the centre of the road so as to straddle the hump.

The different techniques used by drivers to overcome these obstacles is shown below:



Take the Centre :Line (Straddle)



Try to Squeeze Between Hump and Kerb
(Only possible in small vehicles)



Take the Normal Line
(But Get Jolted by Having One Wheel Only on the Hump)

(Editors Comments: A better solution than these single “cushions” would surely be to build a second table at the entrance to the new development).

If you agree with BBRAG that this is a thoroughly silly scheme, send your objections to Gordon Hayward at Bromley Council.

Chislehurst Station Speed Humps

Station Approach in Chislehurst has had small speed “bumps” for some time. These are particularly vicious as they are not marked in any way and also scrape the underside of some vehicles. The road is being resurfaced and it is likely they will be replaced by rubber/plastic prefabricated bumps as have recently been installed in Orpington station car park, which at least may be a bit more visible. However wouldn't it be better if they were not replaced at all? If you agree, send your complaints to: Mark Thomas, Central Parking Systems, 22 High Street, Westerham, TN16 1RG.

Note that local commuters are also complaining about the recent increases in parking prices (as much as 56%). One of the justifications given by Central Parking Systems was the cost of the speed bumps!

Waldo Rd/Homesdale Rd Congestion



Yes it's springtime again, and as soon as some fine weather appears the traffic jams on Homesdale Road blossom anew. These arise from the queues to get into the Waldo

Road rubbish tip when people begin their spring cleaning.

This problem has been covered in our Newsletters in previous years. Urgent action was promised by councillors and council staff. Contractors have been changed and the site reorganised, but any improvement soon seems to wane. Another urgent examination of this problem is being undertaken by the council.

Note that some experimental subsidiary sites for the disposal of “green” waste have recently been set up, to try and relieve the pressure on the Waldo Road site. Bromley Council can supply more details.

Cutting Excessive Speed and Warning of Road Hazards

Much emphasis has recently been placed on reducing vehicle speeds on British roads. So for example, over 3 million speeding tickets are likely to be issued this year, and speed humps have been sprouting everywhere. And yet these expensive programmes have had negligible effect on road accident statistics. All that has happened is that an army of people (police, court staff, and the manufacturers and installers of speed cameras and road humps) have been deployed to achieve very little.

At present we have a regime where minor infringements of speed limits result in severe punishment, as if we were all naughty children who needed severe disciplining. In the case of speed humps, we are actually chastised with corporal punishment, when it has long been abandoned in our courts and schools. However, it is still recognised that reducing vehicle speeds at known danger spots (such as on Leasons Hill in Orpington) would clearly be advantageous.

How to achieve changes in driver habits, or warn drivers of temporary oversights, at an economical cost and without unnecessarily criminalising large swathes of the population is the issue. Perhaps education is a better approach?

Well recently the Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) have reported on the use of electronic warning signs. These can warn drivers

of excessive speed, or alternatively be used to indicate that dangerous bends or junctions are coming up. You may have seen some already in Bromley and more extensive use is anticipated. Examples are shown below.



The picture above shows a sign that lights up to display a vehicles speed when it is above a certain level (yes the van was actually doing 38 mph on Leasons Hill, before braking).



The picture on the left (on Main Road, Biggin Hill) shows a sign warning of an impending dangerous bend (it lights up if the driver is approaching too fast).

Now the really interesting thing about this report is that it conclusively shows that these devices are not just effective at slowing down drivers, but that they are also much better than speed cameras at reducing accidents.

At the sites studied, where these devices have been installed over a number of years, average speeds were reduced by 4 mph, and by 7 mph for junction and bend warnings. Accidents were reduced by one third!

Another major advantage was that the effects did not seem to wear off over time, and the

initial installation cost and running costs are a fraction of those for speed cameras. These devices can also be used as a good alternative to speed humps on minor roads.

The full report can be seen on the internet at <http://www.trl.co.uk/static/dttr/pdfs/TRL548.pdf>

(Editors Comments: Clearly a major improvement over the use of speed cameras and road humps with much greater acceptability to the general public. Bromley council staff are to be congratulated on pioneering these devices in the London area.)

UDP Revisions



A revised Unitary Development Plan (UDP) has been under discussion for some time. This document lays out the policies that will apply for the next few years in many

areas of Bromley. It covers not just land and building plans, but infrastructure such as transport.

A first draft was issued last year and BBRAG made a number of comments on it (the document was heavily biased against car transport). All of our comments were ignored.

The latest update contains in Para 5.19 of the Transport section the following proposed addition: *“The purpose of the parking standards is to enable control of the number of car journeys and to ensure that development makes an appropriate provision for off-street parking. The residential and non-residential parking standards should not normally be exceeded.....”*. Note that when they say “appropriate” they typically mean inadequate because the standards set are normally insufficient, and cannot of course “be exceeded”.

Clearly the council believes that it should have control of when and where you care to use your car. If you think otherwise, as BBRAG does, write to the following: Colin Ruddlesden, Head of Development Plan, Bromley Council, Stockwell Close, Bromley BR1 3UH.

(Editors Comment: This is yet another example of the “command and control” style of government that operates at present. Central government adopts a policy that they will stop you using your car whenever possible, and zealous local planners implement it via this kind of local dictat.)

Environment Portfolio Plan



A new Bromley Council Environment Portfolio Plan for 2003-2006 was recently adopted. The Environment Department looks after transport, among other things, in case you are not

aware. The specified “Aims” of the plan in the section headed “More Responsible Use of the Car and the Development of other Forms of Transport” are as follows (verbatim), with some comments from your editor in italics:

1. Promotion of other forms of transport to achieve less congestion at peak times. *There is no evidence that promoting alternative transport modes has ever had any significant effect on traffic congestion.*
2. Reduced dominance of the car in residential areas. *See comments above.*
3. Better air quality as a result of reduction in traffic movements. *Reducing air pollution by cutting car use is totally ineffective. This is clear from the London Mayors Air Quality Strategy document (for example, the London congestion charging scheme will have a negligible impact on air quality despite reducing traffic considerably). The major contributors to poor air quality are HGVs, LGVs, buses and taxis and the volumes of those are not reduced by most traffic reduction policies. The only way to improve air quality substantially is to improve vehicle emissions, and improve traffic flows. Whoever devised this “portfolio aim” clearly knew nothing about this subject, and the end result is likely to be no improvement in air quality.*
4. Fewer road accident casualties. *I think we can all agree with this aim.*
5. Improve the road network for bus services. *Interesting in that it says nothing about improving the road network for other road users! So how is improving the road network for bus services to be*

achieved then? Presumably by taking road space from other road users and giving it to buses (ie. more bus lanes).

In summary: another missed opportunity to have some realistic, practical policies for the next few years. No doubt we will see the same garbage come up again in 2006, when the proposals have had no effect. Of course, the other important point to note is what the plan leaves out - such as no intention to improve the road transport network.

Council Tax Review

As the new council tax year has just started, with your bills rising by 10.6% on average, it seems an opportune moment to review how your money gets spent in regards to transport matters in Bromley.

The first thing to note however is that expenditure on “Highways and Engineering Services” is a very minor part of council budgets - only 6% in fact. Some 83% of council net costs are taken up by education (mainly teacher’s salaries) and the provision of social services. The education budget alone has gone up by 11.6% over the previous year, and it has been reported in other newspapers that staff wage rises, increases in national insurance and increased pension contributions mean that education costs nationally would be up by 10% this year even if staff numbers were unchanged.

(Editors Comment: If you want to know why your council taxes always rise faster than inflation and faster than your income, then the lack of attention to productivity improvements in the education sector is certainly one of them.)

One factor that has increased overall council costs by 2.5% (hence making a substantial contribution to the overall increase of 10.6%) is the increase in the GLA Precept, ie. the amount demanded by the GLA for central police, fire and transport costs. The latter includes the costs of Transport for London which is the biggest chunk of all and which covers maintenance of main arterial routes and subsidies to public transport.

Outer London boroughs such as Bromley are certainly being charged a lot more, but get little in the way of extra benefits. The extra police recruited added to the costs substantially but

almost all of them were placed in central London boroughs. In TfL, bus subsidies doubled to £597 million, which is a massive sum, again benefiting relatively few people and mainly those in central London. New London roads head Peter Hendy recently forecast that this subsidy will rise to £1 billion in the next few years! Another large element in the cost increase for TfL is the £1.7 billion budgeted for London Underground for the first time - again not much benefit to Bromley residents there.

Note that the public transport improvements are not being funded to any great extent by the London congestion charge which is likely to net only just over £100m, and TfL funding from central Government is likely to be cut by more than that in future years according to recent reports, leaving you and I to fund the above cost increases.

Going back to the issue of “Highways and Engineering Services” costs in Bromley, these are only going up by 6% (although that’s still twice retail inflation of course). A rough breakdown of expenditure is as follows for the 2003/2004 year:

Description	£ mill
Transportation Planning	1.4
Street Cleaning/Vehicle Removal	3.6
Road Repairs/Reconstruction	1.5
Footpath Repairs/Reconstruction	2.3
Road Markings, Guard Rails, Drain Repairs, Gully Cleaning	0.7
Street Lighting Maintenance, Replacement and Energy Costs	2.3
Tree planting, verge maintenance	0.3
Snow clearing, salting/gritting	0.3
Surveys, support, overheads, premises and insurance	2.4
Staff costs	2.0
Capital charges (highways, street lighting, etc)	4.2
Misc income/recharges	(1.2)
Car Parking Charges (Net Rev)	(2.4)
Road Safety	0.4
Other	0.2
Total	18.0

Note that despite the repeated encouragement by council staff for us to use public transport, council budgets included £32,580 for employees leased cars and £89,600 for car allowances, but only £710 for other travelling expenses.

Likely capital expenditure in the coming year includes (most of this funded by TfL grants):

- £0.9m on London Bus Priority Network (ie. bus lanes) - mainly on routes 119 and 51.
- £0.5m on Seltrans.
- £1.6m on maintenance of principal roads.
- £1.7m on improvements to local roads.
- £0.7m on off street car park refurbishment.

Editors Comments: As you can see from the above, almost all the budget is spent on routine services and facilities maintenance. Capital expenditure on transport mainly depends on TfL grants, which are usually to worthy causes such as bus lanes or cycle lanes, with almost nothing on the basic road transport network. Now you can see why the transport infrastructure in this country is in such a mess.

Question: Who has the biggest say in preparing council budgets? Answer: Council staff.

Question: Who has the most to gain if budgets rise (or the most to lose if they fall)? Answer: Council staff (wages are by far the largest element in most council budgets).

Permit Parking Schemes



In November 2002, extensive consultation with local residents and businesses on permit parking schemes for Orpington was

undertaken by the council. Over 300 responses were received.

Some 54% of respondents did not want such a scheme in the Orpington area, with 34% in favour. Clearly a substantial majority against.

However, bearing in mind adopted council policy that the council will “consider introducing parking schemes designed to encourage journeys to work by public transport, avoiding long term on-street parking...” (see LA21 policy document), and the strong desire by local residents in some roads, it was decided to introduce the following:

A permit scheme with shared use “Pay and Display” (3 hours max) in Aynscombe Angle.

A permit scheme blocking non residents use from 10 to 12 am in Devonshire Road, Wiltshire Road and Somerset Road. These roads are marked in red on the map below (at least for those who receive the newsletter via email, otherwise in black).



(Editors Comments: clearly parking was a major problem for residents in those roads where there are mainly terraced houses with no off street parking, and to my personal knowledge probably has been for over 20 years at least - no doubt most residents knew this when they moved there. Difficulties are compounded by the lack of provision for parking by local office and shop workers. It may simply result in long term parkers moving down a street or two, with the usual calls for further extension of the permit parking zone. BBRAG would still like to see better provision of long term, off street parking in the northern part of Orpington. Providing adequate off street parking facilities is the solution to parking problems, not rationing the existing inadequate space via bureaucratic schemes).

Of course, whether the consultation was unbiased is debatable (the leaflets often indicate such schemes will resolve parking problems which is rarely the case). In Lewisham, Mark Swann of the “Action Group Against Parking Permits” is campaigning against similar schemes and is alleging that the results of council consultation done some time ago are very different to his own recent polls of residents.

Permit parking schemes are also being opposed by residents in Edinburgh where they are actually putting up candidates in the local elections - see web site <http://www.stockweb.net/parking> for more information (the major thrust of the campaign seems to be the Scots notorious reluctance to spend money). Clearly permit parking schemes are no longer as popular as they were once thought to be.

The parking scheme for Locksbottom (covering Princess Parade, Park Parade - Crofton Road, Pallant Way and Elm Walk has now finally been settled after lengthy discussion and will soon be implemented.

A major new consultation for a "Controlled Parking Zone" (ie. permit parking, etc) is being undertaken for a wide area surrounding Crystal Palace, Anerley, Penge West and Penge East stations. How did this proposal arise? Apparently because Transport for London (TfL) have a budget for such schemes and suggested to Bromley Council that they spend the money. One possible justification given was because of concerns about extra parking resulting from more rail users following the introduction of the London congestion charge, although this area is a very long way from the edge of the congestion zone, and there is no evidence of any such effect.

Gareth Davies (council Assistant Director, Transportation Planning), says that there were also a number of requests from the area for such a scheme, but was unable to say how many such requests have been made when asked, even approximately.

(Editors Comments: On a recent visit, there seemed to be little problem with parking in many of the roads in the area proposed. Looks like simply another excuse to create more work for council staff. Certainly this is a good example of how TfL waste money on unnecessary schemes as just the consultation alone could cost several thousand pounds. For more details or to send your objections, contact: Mike Hammond, London Borough of Bromley (Tel: 020-8313-4528).

Other Local Parking Changes



Parking penalty charges in all London boroughs have increased substantially from the 1st April. Central London fines have increased from £80 to £100, and outer London charges from £60 to £80, or from £40 to £60 (depending on the location).

(Editors Comment: It's a bit steep when you make an innocent mistake as I did recently).

In Bromley, parking charges and restrictions are now in effect on Sundays in the town centre (ie. no more parking on single yellow lines and parking meters need to be fed). This has been necessary apparently because of the much increased shopping and other activities in the town centre on Sundays.

However Bromley Council have claimed to have recently added an additional 50 "pay and display" and other parking bays in the town centre.

Blackheath and A2 Proposals



Readers will no doubt be aware that the main A2 Dover/London road runs across Blackheath. This major arterial route has of course been notoriously congested for many years. The desires to preserve the Blackheath open space and not mar the views of the adjacent Greenwich Park, which is a major heritage site, have always ruled out widening of the A2 (although there were proposals many years ago to provide a tunnel or cutting across the heath).

The managers of Blackheath (Greenwich and Lewisham Councils) have recently devised some proposals to improve the area. These plans include:

- That the A2 road be narrowed and "softened" with grass mounds alongside. Footpaths and cycle paths would be separated from the trunk roads. *(Editor: note that the A2 is already only a single carriageway so this may not make an enormous difference, even though it could be a waste of money).*

- The junctions on the A2 with Hyde Vale, Charlton Way, Goffers Road and Prince Charles Road would be revised with the roundabout on the latter probably replaced by traffic lights and other lights installed with a “phased system” to smooth traffic flow.

- The entrance to Greenwich Park would be improved and two way traffic reinstated on Charlton Way. (*Editors Comment: this seems to make some sense as the arrangement is currently very confusing and illogical*).

- Signs, benches, bins and traffic barriers would be rationalised and the landscape improved.

What’s the cost of these proposals - a mere £2 million approximately which they hope to get from the Heritage Lottery Fund (that’s excluding the works on the A2 which would be paid by Transport for London which you and I fund).

For further information suggested contacts are the Boroughs of Lewisham and Greenwich or TfL, although none seem to be inviting public consultation on these proposals.

CfIT for the Chop?

Readers of this Newsletter will know that government transport policy, including the 10 year plan, has been formulated by the Commission for Integrated Transport (CfIT). This is headed by David Begg, an academic who is notoriously anti-car (picture below). He is a keen promoter of congestion charging, spending more on public transport systems to solve traffic congestion (which has yet to be shown to work), and reducing road building.



The 10 year transport plan is now in serious disarray with targets exceedingly unlikely to be met, and traffic congestion getting worse. Even the public train and bus services are not improving as planned.

The Government has announced a review of the CfIT, and it may well be shut down.

Advantages of Newsletters via Email



Receiving our Newsletter via email has a number of advantages which are:

- You can display or print it in colour instead of black and white.
- You can forward it to as many as 5 additional people within your existing membership rights.
- You can quickly go to the referenced web sites, as described below.
- You will receive it a few days sooner.
- It’s easier to file for future reference.
- It saves BBRAG the considerable expense of postage and printing.

On the last point, you are strongly encouraged to take the Newsletter via email as postage and printing is by far the biggest item in the BBRAG accounts.

If anyone who currently receives the newsletter on paper would like it sent via email instead (as a PDF document) then please send an email to the editor at roger.lawson@btlick.com.

Newsletter Format



For those people who receive this Newsletter via email as a PDF document, please note that it is now “web enabled”. This means that to access any of the web sites mentioned in the Newsletter, all you have to do is point and click on the address and it will automatically call up that page in your web browser.

However, you need to either use a left or right mouse click depending on which option you have set in Adobe and which version you are using. If necessary go to the Edit/Preference/Web Capture option in Adobe Acrobat and set it to “Open Weblink in Web Browser”.

To try this new feature simply click on the link below: <http://www.bromleytransport.org.uk> and you should go directly to our web page.

You will also hopefully notice that the Newsletter file sizes are somewhat smaller in future so they will download more quickly, although the resolution of pictures has been slightly reduced. If anyone notices any problems with the new version, or the newsletter appears to be badly formatted in any respect then please advise the editor.

Useful Web Sites



The ROSPA site (The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents which is at <http://www.rospa.com>) contains much useful information on road safety matters. For example they publish a "Road Safety Engineering Manual" which is worth reading for all those interested in road safety. It is used by Bromley Council staff to determine the cost/benefit ratio on proposed schemes, but unfortunately in this case it is based on data from an organisation called the TMS Consultancy which appears to be misleading. The data ignores the impact of traffic diversion on road safety schemes which can be very significant in the case of hump schemes (averages 25% and can be up to 50% according to TRL reports 186 and 312). ROSPA also sell road safety products so if you want to purchase your own warning signs, traffic cones, or speed bumps, their site is the place to go.

The TMS Consultancy, who provide road safety consultancy services and whose web site is at <http://www.tmsconsultancy.co.uk> is also worth visiting if you have an interest in road safety. There are a number of reports, spread sheets and other free material under the "Free Stuff" section of "Resources", including some simple statistical tools. By using the latter you'll be able to easily tell whether claimed accident changes are significant or not.

A good source of local news (and more instant than waiting for your next delivery of the free NewsShopper newspaper) is the following site: <http://www.newsshopper.co.uk/news/bromley>

Stephen Norris has been quick off the mark to start his campaign for Mayor of London

following his adoption as the Conservative candidate with a new internet web site at: <http://www.norrisforlondon.com>. As a former Transport Minister he hopefully should know something about transport issues. His currently announced policy would be to scrap the congestion charge for example. He thinks it is too early to judge it's success or failure, and here's a recent pertinent quote from him "The idea of an invisible cordon around the parks and palaces of central London in which only 3 per cent of our city lives, and marked Poorer Motorists Stay Out is offensive even to an old Tory like me" (Financial Times 21/04/2003).

Another new web site that is worth looking at is: <http://www.getmethere.co.uk>. It provides free traffic information, route planning and weather forecasts. The site is provided by Toyota, and was developed by IS Solutions Ltd.

Note that most of the above sites and a multitude of other useful ones are given on the "Links" page of our web site. This can be accessed directly by going to: <http://www.bromleytransport.org.uk/Links.htm>, or just click on the "Links" tab from any of our pages. If you haven't been there before, it is recommended you take a look as there is almost certainly something there likely to be of interest.

The Safest Way to Travel?



The ROSPA Road Safety Engineering Manual mentioned above, gives some interesting figures on the risk of different travel modes. For example, the chance of being killed or seriously injured per billion passenger kilometres is as follows:

Mode	KSI/Billion Kilometres
Motor cycling	690
Pedal cycling	436
Walking	314
Water transport	23
Car travel	21
Rail travel	1
Air travel	0.01

Well I think we all know how dangerous motor cycling is, but clearly pedal cycling and walking are almost equally hazardous. (*Editors Comment: next time you need to pop to the corner shop for a newspaper or a packet of fags, I suggest you drive - it's clearly a lot safer. Of course there is a serious point here also - encouraging pedal cycling for commuters may improve their general health but could result in many more accident casualties. Such can be the unintended consequences of interfering in people's personal choices.*)

Hump Count and Cost in Bromley



Do you know how many speed humps there are in Bromley? Well the latest count is 393! Total expenditure by the council to date on hump schemes has been over £1 million.

Apart from the numerous objections to speed humps which have been covered in this Newsletter and previous editions, is there any obvious impact of these schemes on the number of road accidents? To cut a long story short, in summary the answer is no.

Although road accident casualties have fallen in the last few years (but not last year - see separate article), the trend was downwards anyway before speed hump schemes were introduced. Also the reduction in "killed or seriously injured" has been relatively small and may not even be statistically significant. Separating out any possible benefit from other safety improvements (such as improved in-car safety) is almost impossible, particularly as only a relatively small proportion of the boroughs roads have humps installed.

Unfortunately there has been no scientific, unbiased study of hump schemes, comparing say similar areas where hump schemes were introduced with those where other measures were employed.

If you want to see a complete list of all roads with details of the hump schemes in Bromley then go to our web site where there is new list: http://www.bromleytransport.org.uk/Hump_List.htm . Alternatively for those without access to the internet, contact the editor for a hardcopy.

London and Bromley Accident Data



Figures have recently been released for road accidents and casualties in Greater London for 2002. There was an overall decrease in accidents of 8% over the previous year.

Fatalities were down by 6% to 280.
Serious injuries were down by 7% to 5,370
Slight injuries were down by 7% to 35,729.

However, these improvements were concentrated mainly in the inner London boroughs. For example total casualties decreased by 10% in inner London, but only 5% in outer London. The probable reason for this was the increased congestion in central London, particularly prior to the introduction of the congestion charge. With slower or stationary traffic, accidents will be reduced. (*Editors Comment: I have even seen it suggested that the extra speed of traffic after the introduction of the congestion charge is leading to safety problems which may require more traffic calming measures to be introduced! Will Ken Livingstone drop the congestion charging scheme if one clear consequence is more road accidents - I doubt it.*)

Bromley's figures actually showed an increase in casualties of 10%, to 1383. Not a good result, but taking one year in isolation can be difficult to interpret.

Speed Cameras in Kent to Increase



There are going to be 14 new fixed camera sites and 19 mobile cameras added to the 48 existing speed cameras in Kent. These are being installed by the Kent and Medway Safety Camera Partnership which is supported by Kent County Council, Medway Council, the Highways Agency, Kent Police and the Magistrates Court Service. There was no public consultation on this change. The resulting increase in fines will no

doubt enable further expansion of this organisation.

(Editors Comment: One clear demonstration of how speed fine collection is now an industry in its own right is that this organisation not only as a "Communication Officer", it even has it's own internet web site - see:

<http://www.kentandmedwaysafetycameras.org.uk>.

On there you can read how they conducted an opinion poll to show how popular speed cameras are - all I can say is that they didn't ask me).

Incidentally one interesting piece of information from the ROSPA Traffic Engineering Manual mentioned in the article above is that speed cameras typically only reduce accidents by 13% (source is the TMS Consultancy based on historic schemes). As it is quite likely that simple warning signs might create similar reductions, this shows how ineffective and costly such devices are.

For example, the accident savings from speed cameras is, from that figure, substantially less than that achieved by the speed display units mentioned in the article above. Speed display units cost a fraction of the money to install, and have hardly any operating costs, unlike speed cameras!

Croydon Tramlink Correction

Our previous Newsletter contained an error in that there have in fact been 3 fatal accidents associated with the Tramlink, rather than 2. To quote the Manager of London Trams, Philip Hewitt, "The two that have been investigated... have shown that there was no fault attributable to Tramlink. Each of these incidents involved a pedestrian stepping immediately in front of a moving tram." *(Editors Comment: If they had been road vehicles, the driver would no doubt have been blamed for going too fast. Oddly enough, stepping recklessly off the kerb is also the commonest explanation for most car/pedestrian collisions).*



BBRAG Background Information

The Bromley Borough Roads Action Group (B.B.R.A.G.) stands for a more democratic and more rational approach to the traffic management problems of the London Borough of Bromley. Our initial formation some years ago was based on opposition to the kind of traffic calming scheme that was being introduced in the borough that simply caused more traffic congestion, and general inconvenience to road users, without any significant benefit in terms of road accident reductions. In fact, the money wasted on such schemes could have been much better spent on actual improvements to road safety in other areas. We now take a more general interest in all transport and associated environmental issues in the borough of Bromley and the greater London area. This includes traffic management schemes, public transport, road safety, parking policies, air pollution, other transport environmental issues such as noise, and associated local and central government policies. Our prime objective is to promote improvements in the transport infrastructure while stopping wasted expenditure on unpopular, ineffective or inappropriate policies.

Contact Information

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B.B.R.A.G. Treasurer and Newsletter Editor: Roger Lawson (Tel: 020-8467-2686, fax: 020-8295-0378, Email: roger.lawson@btclick.com), Chairman: Peter Appleby. Contact either of the above for information on the aims and objectives of B.B.R.A.G. or for membership information (membership costs £7.50 per annum for individuals or £50 for corporate membership). B.B.R.A.G. would be happy to advise or assist anyone who is concerned about any traffic, transport or road safety issues in the borough.

Our internet web address is: <http://www.bromleytransport.org.uk>. This contains much useful information including articles extracted from our newsletters. It also contains a "News" page which is updated regularly with items of topical interest.

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