



BBRAG NEWS

Bromley Borough Roads Action Group - No. 24 (October 2003)

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Editorial

This edition contains the usual mix of local and national transport news. It includes some more data on the London Congestion Charge which is rapidly falling into disrepute, and other measures by Ken Livingstone to try and improve public transport. The cost of those measures has not been disclosed, but it is clear that a budget crisis is looming for Transport for London.

If you have any questions or comments on the enclosed material then please contact the editor - in most cases the information provided is only a summary of what is available.

Roger Lawson, Editor

Council Loses Hump Legal Case



A rare example of a motorist winning a law suit over speed humps against a local council is that of David Cleminson of Carlisle. Last year he forced Cumbria Council to reduce the height of speed humps near his home to 65 mm (they are normally 75 mm or higher).

He claimed that they prevented him driving his low slung vintage Standard Avon (picture above) over the humps without damage, contrary to section 9 of the Highways (Traffic Calming) Regulations 1999 which reads "No traffic calming work shall be constructed or maintained in a carriageway so as to prevent the passage of any vehicle unless the passage of that vehicle is otherwise lawfully prohibited").

Any members who have difficulty with grounding or damage to their vehicles might like to consider similar actions! (*Editor's Comments: I would join in such an action but unfortunately by current vehicle is fairly immune to such problems.*)

London Congestion Charge



Our last Newsletter contained a long article reviewing the success of the Congestion Charge and some of its operational difficulties.

The latter are clearly not trivial as Ken Livingstone has recently announced that a further £31 million will be given to Capita over the next four and half years to compensate them for the fact that they are not making a profit from it. In addition there was £2.9 million on hiring consultants to advise on this problem.

Shortfall in Revenue

The main excuse is that there has been a shortfall in expected revenue (originally forecast to be over £200 million net, then £120 million, then £65 million and now more like £58 million per annum) resulting from motorists avoiding driving into the zone. But it also seems that there are a number of other problems with the scheme.

(Editor's Comments: It is not totally clear why taxpayers should bail Capita out unless the contract terms were not being met by TfL. However as the money will be used to improve enforcement, it looks to be a case of either paying or see the scheme gradually collapse through avoidance. Clearly the scheme is getting near to the point where a few more people not paying will cause melt down in the administrative systems.)

Technical Difficulties

Apparently the cameras don't always pick up number plates properly. Some of this is the result of sun glare and reflections off the plates so polarising filters are having to be fitted at extra cost. The intention is also to put a lot more human beings on to reviewing photographs as the automatic number plate recognition does not seem to work reliably *(Editor's Comments: The latter could explain why I had so much difficulty in collecting a penalty notice)*.

Contested Penalty Notices

Many penalty notices that have been sent out are also simply ignored, or are contested by the recipients. Some 103,000 were outstanding in mid July and the number is rising. And according to the Association of British Drivers, of 1125 cases handled so far by the Appeals System, TfL have only won 71 of them. *(Editor's Comments: This is probably not surprising from my own experience of this system. In the previous Newsletter I explained how I had tested out the reliability of the*

technology and it generally failed to pick me up. However I did receive one Penalty Notice which I contested and asked for evidence of the offence. This should have gone to the Appeals Adjudicator but in fact TfL were apparently unable to provide the evidence and failed to contest the appeal).

Consequences of Inaccurate Forecasting

This additional shortfall in revenue for TfL is added to the £51 million overspend on other projects such as the unbudgeted study to expand the congestion charge zone westwards and the overrun on the pedestrianisation of Trafalgar Square. As a result projects such as the Coulsdon relief road and improvements to the North Circular are being deferred, plus increases in road safety expenditure are being cancelled.

According to a report in the Daily Telegraph, which contained a strong critique of the congestion charge, the net result of Livingstone's transport policies could result in about £200 being added to the average Londoner's council tax bill in a few years time.

Was the Car the Culprit?

Another report suggested that the reason for congestion getting worse in recent years is nothing to do with the growth of private car use in London. In fact between 1981 and 2002, the number of people entering London by private car between 7 am and 10 am fell from 173,000 to 105,000 while the daily total of traffic movements fell from 1,078,000 to 895,000. There was also a substantial reduction in the number of good vehicles entering London in that period. Meanwhile the average traffic speed fell from 12 mph to 9 mph. At the same time taxi journeys in London went up by 30 per cent and bus movements by 20%. These figures are from TfL.

(Editor's Comments: It seems more likely to me that the reduction in traffic volumes and speeds are probably more due to reducing road space and other anti-car road "improvement" measures than the increase in taxis and buses).

Effects on Shopping

At the end of July the British Retail Consortium (BRC) reported that London was losing shoppers at an alarming rate. Retail sales volume was growing at half the rate in London as the rest of the UK, and some shops in Oxford Street were reporting sales down by 20% on the previous year. They said that “the congestion charge is not helping central London, but mostly because of the hassle of paying it rather than the £5 fee”.

Brian Southwell of the BRC also said “Why would you struggle into the centre of town on an unreliable and dirty Tube and back carrying heavy bags? You are better off shopping locally or driving out of town in your air conditioned car to somewhere like Bluewater”. *(Editor’s Comments: An opinion very familiar to many Bromley residents no doubt).*

Mayor Raises Bus & Tube Fares

Because of the looming hole in the finances of Transport for London, the Mayor of London is raising bus and tube fares by an average of 3.6% and 7.4% respectively. Ken Livingstone said this is “Because there is no extra funding from government...”. Tory mayoral candidate Steve Norris said he had broken his promises made in 2000 to peg tube increases to the rate of inflation and freezing bus fares while saying “His budget is a shambles. He has betrayed Londoners who believed him when he said that the congestion charge would pay for the public transport improvements and there is far worse to come from Ken Livingstone”.

The latter comment refers to a recent letter to the Daily Telegraph where Mr Livingstone said the aim of the congestion charge “was always to cut traffic and congestion, not to make money”. *(Editor’s Comments: Certainly different to my recall of the promised benefits of the congestion charge where it was going to pay for a massive improvement in public transport).*

Fares on the Underground

The Financial Times reports that London Underground is now the most expensive in the world. The minimum Tube fare will now be

£1.60 (which will be rising to £2.00) when it is 95p in New York, 88p in Paris and 84p in Tokyo. The fare will have risen from £1 in 1995 to £2 in 2004, which just shows how much in excess of inflation have been public fare increases.

It has been suggested by some people that the large increase in Underground fares is a tube “congestion charge” to encourage people to move to using the buses. With the expansion in bus routes and numbers, the latter often run part empty.

(Editor’s Comments: I think it’s just Mr Livingstone trying to improve the health of Londoners by encouraging us to walk instead of take the tube. For a few stops, anyone would think twice about spending £2).

Save Money with an Oyster Card



One minor concession to the above mentioned fare increases is that you will save money if you switch to using the new “Oyster” cards (logo on left). These are new radio based “smart” plastic cards that are planned to replace conventional magnetic stripe tickets for most London trips.

They can be deactivated if lost or stolen, and save time as they can be waved at ticket collection point rather than have to go through the machine. They will also replace to a large extent the use of cash on buses which delay the bus and is a major security problem.

The new cards are being brought in over the next few months and are requiring a major investment in new ticketing machines and entry gates. At the same time, paying cash on buses in central London is being banned. You must now buy a ticket before you get on the bus from a machine typically sited by the bus stop (assuming you don’t already have a prepaid Oyster card). This is estimated to reduce bus journey times by 10% but again requires very substantial investment in new equipment.

Mayor Livingstone says that as Oyster card users will not effectively pay the increased fares, there will not in reality be any fare increases. For more information go to the following web site: <http://www.oystercard.com>

“Bus Plus” Improvements



A new programme to improve bus routes in London is called “Bus Plus” (logo on left) with an initial 27 routes being worked on, including route 119 in Bromley.

The programmes include more bus priority measures (ie. bus lanes), tougher enforcement, kerb changes, bus shelter improvements, and more information displays. On the 119 route for example, it includes road junction changes, moving of bus stops, changes to permitted parking adjacent to bus stops and other changes.

The laudable objectives are to make bus journeys more reliable, reduce “bunching” of buses and make the bus environment cleaner, more comfortable and more convenient for passengers.

Refer to the following page on the London Transport web site for more information: http://www.tfl.gov.uk/streets/bp_making_your_bus_service_better.shtml

(Editor’s Comments: How much will this programme cost? For the 119 route alone in Bromley: £70,000. As with other recent requests for information to Transport for London, it took some time to get a response to a request for this information. Letters and emails to TfL or the Mayor of London’s office often go unacknowledged and ignored. The total cost of the Bus Plus initiative is unknown but on that basis it could be several million pounds..).

Bromley Air Quality Strategy



We have previously reported in this Newsletter that Bromley has relatively minor problems with air pollution. For example, there are no areas in the

borough that are expected to fail the standards set in the National Air Quality Strategy. As a result, it has not been necessary to declare any “Air Quality Management Areas”.

Bromley is therefore not required by the Mayor of London’s Air Quality strategy to declare any “action zones”, but is required to produce an “Air Quality Strategy” document. This it has now done and you can obtain a copy from the council if you want to read the full 94 pages.

What does it say? Apart from repeating some amusing stories from local newspapers about London smogs in the early 1950s, it emphasises again that although there are localised areas of poor air quality in Bromley, that in general pollution from traffic is falling. Improvements in motor vehicle technology are likely to lead to falling pollution levels until at least 2010, even if traffic is not reduced by other policy measures. The report rightly points out that air quality has been improving although many people think the opposite is the case.

It reiterates the necessity to reduce motor traffic, which is a common plank of Bromley council policies, but does not explain why that is a practical solution, or even necessary. *(Editor’s Comments: There is no evidence that this policy is achievable and at best it seems that it will only reduce the growth of traffic, which in Bromley is already constrained by road capacity limitations in any case. It will certainly not have any significant impact on air pollution levels..)*

The worst parts of the borough for local pollution are probably Sevenoaks Way in Orpington, Kentish Way (the town centre bypass), Westmoreland Road, Crystal Palace Parade and Bromley Common/Hayes Lane junction. These locations are characterised by the presence of large numbers of heavy goods vehicles and buses (these two are the worst polluters) plus stationary queues of traffic from road congestion. There are no proposals in the report to tackle these problems, and note that cutting out a few car journeys is not likely to make any difference to those locations.

The report also mentions the use of parking policies such as raising prices to unaffordable levels or introducing permit parking schemes, as one way to reduce traffic, but fails to point out that these policies do not have any significant public support, apart from being unlikely to be effective in cutting pollution. *(Editor’s Comments: Some of these policies are enshrined in the new*

Unitary Development Plan which BBRAG is making objections to during the Public Inquiry).

The report does propose six Action Points, but these are pretty bland, such as maintaining monitoring programmes and a commitment to stick to other policies laid down by the GLA or central Government.

(Editor's Comments: On the whole a useful document in terms of information, but the analysis it contains is pretty weak as it tends to follow the established "politically correct" policies promoted elsewhere. Nothing very specific that would have real benefits to air pollution in Bromley is proposed so it's very much a "maintain the status quo" or "do nothing" kind of report. As usual with such reports, it's more significant in terms of what it leaves out than what it includes. But at least it won't cost us anything, except maybe some unnecessarily inflated car parking charges).

Mobile Speed Cameras in Bromley



If you see a van like the one on the left, you had better slow down. This is one of the new mobile

speed camera units acquired by the London Camera Safety Partnership (LCSP) which is being deployed on the streets of London, including the borough of Bromley.

Linking Speed with Accidents

Head of Road Safety in Bromley, John Walton, claimed when launching this new initiative that "one in five road accidents in Bromley are caused by excessive speed (equivalent to 288 casualties per year)". However it seems that this statement is somewhat misleading as in reality there are usually several contributory factors in the causes of particular accidents and he has conceded that he should have said "that excessive speed is a major contributory factor in one in five accidents".

(Editor's Comments: His conclusions are also based on a very subjective analysis of accident data and he won't even disclose the data to enable it to be examined so the reliability of even the latter statement is certainly doubtful).

He also said when launching this new initiative: "Speeding is a bigger and more serious problem than drink driving. We hope that the speed detection unit will persuade drivers to slow down before it is too late".

For more information, go to the following web site: <http://www.tfl.gov.uk/streets/lscpl/>

(Editor's Comments: If you don't notice such a van, you probably deserve to get a ticket. But your editor is not convinced that excessive speed is a significant contribution to accident causation in Bromley and doubts that expenditure of money and police time on these kind of programmes is likely to be cost effective. Speed fines are now running at over a million a year in the UK, and yet the overall accident figures, and particularly the killed and seriously injured are not falling to any significant extent.

Proposed Permit Parking Extensions



It is proposed to extend the Controlled

Parking Zones in Bromley to cover Bourne Road, Haywood Road, Homesdale Road and Lytchet Road. These roads will have a permit parking scheme introduced that will ban parking by non-residents between 12 am and 2 pm.

If you object to these proposals write to the Director of Environmental Services at Bromley Council quoting the following reference: ADE(TP)/CC/100/935.

(Editor's Comments: This seems to be yet another example of having to expand a previous scheme simply because parked cars relocate further away. Restricting parking in these roads at lunchtime is also likely to adversely impact local traders. BBRAG is opposed to the further extension of permit parking schemes.

What are our objections to such schemes? These are:

Objections to Permit Parking Schemes

1. Controlled Parking Zones and Permit Parking Schemes are really an attempt to reserve local parking spaces for residents, when they have no particular rights to such space. There is no moral or legal reason why residents should have priority for parking in roads which are public property.
2. Although, we recognize that residents may have particular difficulty in these areas when they do not have any off street parking (for example because there are terraced houses), most of the residents were fully aware of this situation before they moved into the properties (these problems have been present in Bromley for very many years, while the average residence time for a house in the UK is less than 10 years).
3. These schemes are promoted on the fact that they will resolve parking problems for residents when often they do not (there is no guarantee of sufficient spaces for residents, particularly now that households often own multiple cars). They also mean that residents end up paying for use of spaces which were free before, at considerable cost.
4. They certainly inconvenience non-residents who now may find it impossible to find a parking space within a reasonable distance. This does not just cause a problem for commuters parking near stations. It can also cause difficulties for people making short visits to local facilities such as shops, or simply visiting friends or making business visits (although some schemes only have certain hours blocked out these vary from location to location so unless one knows the area very well it can be difficult to avoid).
5. These schemes have a considerable administrative overhead. In fact the only real financial beneficiaries of the schemes are council staff who are employed to administer them.
6. In the case of areas where commuter parking is a problem, these schemes do not solve the problem - they simply move it a few streets away or to another station area altogether. In the extreme case, they deter people from using rail transport with the end result that people drive all the way, which is surely not a sensible thing to encourage. It would in our view be much better if the time, effort and expense put into these schemes be used to develop appropriate off-street parking for all existing parking users

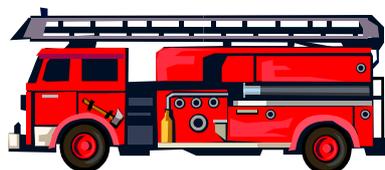
Motorcyclist Crippled by Speed Hump

One sad item of UK news that does not seem to have been previously reported in the press was

an accident to a motorcyclist in Wood Lane, Isleworth a couple of years ago. In this case an inexperienced motorcyclist rode over a speed hump at much less than 30 mph, was ejected from the bike, and suffered serious injuries. As a result he is now paralysed from the waist down.

The hump was near the permissible maximum size of 100 mm, but even so, this is yet another example of the dangers and disadvantages of speed humps. His solicitors have filed a law suit against the local council but the case is not easy.

Traffic Calming Programmes and Emergency Response



We have covered previously in this Newsletter

the negative impact of traffic calming measures, particularly speed humps, on emergency vehicle response times. Ambulances and fire tenders are particularly badly affected by these devices, so for example the Head of the London Ambulance Service recently claimed that more deaths were caused by unnecessary delays resulting from speed humps, than were saved by the traffic calming devices.

A very good discussion of this subject is a masters thesis by Leslie Bunte which is available to read on the internet (all 257 pages of it) at http://home.cfl.rr.com/gidusko/texts/tfc_calm.pdf. Although the author is an American based in Austin, Texas, so much of what he says is based on US data, he also reviews the European literature. Here's what he says in the introduction:

“A policy analysis was conducted specifically for the conflict that had arisen in Austin, Texas. Based on quantitative processes, this analysis showed that Austin would lose an additional 37 lives per year with patients of sudden cardiac arrest if the Fire and EMS Departments experienced a 30 second delay in response times due to traffic calming. The analyses also concluded that at best, only one pedestrian life could be saved each year from traffic calming as pedestrian fatalities rarely occurred within residential neighbourhoods.

A risk/benefit analyses also demonstrated that traffic-calming devices have more of a negative impact than a positive impact to the community. To reduce the conflict, and ensure at least a balance of these two public goods, a set of recommendations was formulated for the City of Austin policy makers and for those of other communities who had similar circumstances.”

Or consider this quote which is not untypical of the way these things are debated in the UK:

“Traffic calming policies are full of public debate and emotion from all factions of the community. Generally, this includes a specific group of neighbourhood residents who desire traffic calming devices vying against those who routinely pass through the neighbourhood, including representatives from the emergency services departments, who oppose their use. One can easily envision the spectacle at such a public hearing debate.

With fake blood cosmetology and trauma depicted bandages, young four to six year old children are marched before a city council dais, while pleading protective mothers are theatrically urging the council members to prevent child pedestrian tragedies by installing traffic calming devices within their neighbourhood. Their claim is that few seconds, or even a minute, of delay encountered by emergency responders is insignificant to a child being killed by a speeding car.

On the other hand, the mayor and council is often faced with the Fire Chief, emblazoned in a full dress service uniform, advising the council members that such action will be detrimental to the emergency service delivery provided to victims and patients. Supplemented with position reinforcing remarks such as those of Fire Chief Larry Donner of the Boulder (CO) Fire Department, makes the final decision a truly high stake issue. ‘One minute is a long time to wait when you are the one not breathing!’. As he further points out, this is even more critical when you have already waited more than three or four minutes for the emergency responders to arrive.”

He does report a number of injuries caused to firefighters in the USA from vehicles crossing speed humps, some of which resulted in them

permanently retiring on a disability pension. This may have been of particular interest to him as he was the Assistant Fire Chief in Austin.

He also reports that many US cities have changed their strategy on traffic calming or put a moratorium on further speed humps. For example, Wayne Tanda a city official in San Jose, California has said: “San Jose’s strategy frowns on devices like road bumps and street closures, which are aimed at the minority of lawbreakers. San Jose decided to stop penalizing 95 percent of its drivers for problems caused by the other five percent.”.

At the end of the report he gives 18 recommendations for ensuring that there is a proper balance between the two public goods of traffic calming versus emergency response. It’s well worth reading if you have an interest in this subject.

The Legal Basis of Traffic Calming

Some of the questions that your editor is often asked are “How is it legal for my local council to obstruct the road with speed humps?”, or “Can I claim against the council for damage to my car caused by speed humps?, or “What are the permitted dimensions of speed humps?”. This article explains the laws by which speed humps are regulated in England and Wales, and helps to give answers to those questions and many others. It is a somewhat long article and is therefore intended for reference only - it is now present on our web site where it will be updated with any future changes.

The Legal Powers

The Secretary of State has powers under the Road Traffic Acts to set Regulations in respect of traffic calming measures and the relevant ones are as follows:

The Highways (Traffic Calming) Regulations 1999 No. 1026 which can be seen on the internet at: <http://www.hmsso.gov.uk/si/si1999/19991026.htm> with a subsequent minor amendment at: <http://www.hmsso.gov.uk/si/si2000/20001511.htm> plus the Highways (Road Humps) Regulations 1999 No. 1025 which is at: <http://www.hmsso.gov.uk/si/si1999/19991025.htm>

These regulations specify what traffic calming devices are permitted and where, what public consultation is required, what street signs are required, and in the last case, the maximum dimensions of speed humps. It is important to note that speed humps are therefore expressly permitted by law and therefore if a hump meets the regulations, you are very unlikely to have any case in law against the local authority for any damage or injury caused by them, with a few minor exceptions.

Consultation

Under these regulations there is an obligation to consult various people about traffic calming schemes. Under the Highways (Traffic Calming) Regulations they must consult the police and "such persons or organisations representing persons who use the highway or who are otherwise likely to be affected by the traffic calming work as the authority thinks fit." Clearly local residents or businesses should therefore be consulted.

Similarly, and even more specifically, under the Highways (Road Humps) Regulations the council must consult "in all cases, organisations appearing to them to represent persons who use the highway to which the proposal related, or to represent persons who are otherwise likely to be affected by the road hump". In addition they must consult local fire and ambulance services.

Organisations such as B.B.R.A.G. who represent road users must clearly therefore be consulted.

Permitted Traffic Calming Devices

These can be almost any features included in a traffic calming scheme such as humps, lighting, paving, grass, pillars, bollards, walls, fences, trees, and many more.

Required Street Signs and Lighting

There must be "adequate warning of the presence of traffic calming works..." and likewise for speed humps. In the specific case of humps, there must also be adequate street lighting (the regulations spell out the specific requirements here in some detail).

Hump Dimensions and Location

Speed humps must be at right angles to the carriageway, be at least 900mm long, be less than 100 mm high and more than 25mm high and not have a vertical face exceeding 6 mm. Note that most speed humps in the UK are now constructed at 75 mm height due to grounding on higher ones, and there are other guidelines on their use and such measures as leading and trailing slopes which are given later, but these do not necessarily have the force of law.

Road humps may be constructed under Zebra, Pelican and Puffin crossings, if centrally located under them. However they cannot be placed near bridge supports, or near tunnels or culverts beneath the road.

Other Restrictions

There are specific regulations on the construction of overrun areas and rumble devices which limit their height for example. But one interesting point to note is the rule that "No traffic calming work shall be constructed or maintained in a carriageway so as to prevent the passage of any vehicle unless the passage of that vehicle is otherwise lawfully prohibited". This was probably designed to avoid such measures being used to prohibit heavy goods vehicles for example, without a more specific regulation being invoked, but it may be relevant in other ways if you own a vehicle that has difficulty in negotiating speed humps.

Guidelines on Use

The government publishes a Road Safety Good Practice Guide which can be obtained from the Department for Transport (DfT) web site at: http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_rdsafety/documents/page/dft_rdsafety_504564.hcsp which is a good starting point if you want to understand the approach by local authorities to road safety measures. Another useful page is http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_roads/documents/pdf/dft_roads_pdf_504790.pdf which contains a Traffic Calming Bibliography. The latter lists a number of "Traffic Advisory Leaflets" published by the DfT on traffic calming measures and also references relevant reports from the Transport Research Laboratory. The Leaflets can be accessed from the following page:

http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_control/documents/contentservertemplate/dft_index.hcs?t=n=6565&l

These Leaflets give a lot more detailed recommendations on actual design and use of speed humps, and such matters as location, signage and pre-installation consultation. For example look at "Speed Control Humps TAL 03/91 and "Highways (Road Humps) Regulations 1996 TAL 07/96". The latter for instance says the following on the subject of consultation: "It is recommended that the consultation process is not limited just to carrying out the statutory duties, but should open up a dialogue with all interested parties to ensure that as far as possible there is a consensus in favour of the scheme. At times it may be necessary for the highway authority to demonstrate their willingness to modify schemes in order to obtain an acceptable compromise." Clearly not something that happens in many local authorities!

Unfortunately the content of Traffic Advisory Leaflets is only advisory but if there were clear contraventions of the advice therein, then you would probably have grounds for complaining to your local council. A failure to respond satisfactorily could give you evidence for a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman (see <http://www.lgo.org.uk>). Any failure to adhere to these recommendations might also help you in any claim for compensation for damage to property or personal injury on the grounds of negligence by the local authority.

Note that the web site addresses mentioned above, particularly the Department for Transport ones, seem to be subject to rapid change so please notify us of any failures in these links so we can correct them in future.

News Snapshots

Sundry news in the last few weeks that is worth a mention is as follows:

+ The Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, has refused to appoint a public inquiry on the Aquila development and the Mayor of London likewise has declined to interfere. So the Bickley

Residents Action Group are now considering whether to apply for a judicial review. They feel that planning law has not been applied correctly and they have new evidence on the history of the site that gives them grounds for appeal.

+ The Public Inquiry on the Bromley Unitary Development Plan (UDP) has commenced work and is likely to stretch into the new year. Big issues will be the Crystal Palace site, Biggin Hill Airport and the Aquila site. BBRAG is making representations on parking policies and the lack of any policies to improve the road transport network in Bromley. We have also argued that some of the statements made in the UDP document to support the proposed policies are factually incorrect and/or downright misleading.

+ A survey by the RAC Foundation shows that the British commute for longer than any other citizens in Europe. The average commute in the UK is 45 minutes, which is up by a fifth in the last decade. The best country is Italy where the average was only 23 minutes.

+ The BBC ran a news story recently on people objecting to speed humps, pointing out that opposition has even united Iain Duncan Smith, Jonathan Miller, Beryl Bainbridge and Joan Bakewell. They also quoted 72 year old Kathleen Jones of Leicester who said "They shouldn't be allowed. They've ruined our lives. They've ruined our peace". Apparently the noise of lorries braking, crossing the humps and accelerating again, outside her home has become intolerable.

+ New speed cameras are being installed in the Limehouse Link Tunnel, a route no doubt used as the way into London by many Bromley residents. They will be new digital cameras which are likely to be "hidden" and be used to enforce the existing speed limit which almost everyone seems to ignore.

Useful Web Sites



An interesting site on the subject of speed humps is located at <http://www.speedhumps.com>. This is in fact provided by a pressure group in Houston, Texas. One of the commonest claims made by the supporters of speed humps is that they may save the lives of children. This site shows that in fact even if you pretend humps would save every

neighbourhood child pedestrian road accident in Houston, you would need to wait 250,000 years for the current programme of humps to save such a life in your particular street (and they already have one of the most extensive hump programmes in the USA). *(Editor's Comments: Of course there is no evidence that humps save any lives anyway).*

The government have launched a new web site for motorists at <http://www.motoring.gov.uk>. However it does not as yet seem to contain much additional or new information.

As the BBRAG web site does receive a number of visits from overseas and other parts of the UK, a page has been added to our web site that summarises information on the borough and its political structure. See it at the following page: http://www.bromleytransport.org.uk/Bromley_Background.htm

A useful site for European transport data is: http://europa.eu.int/comm/energy_transport/etif/lists/transport.html For example you can see how many miles of motorway the UK has in comparison with other European countries - we come out particularly badly of course in relation to our population or economic size.



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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