

Totnes & District Traffic and Transport Forum

AGM & Meeting

25 January 2023, 18:30 – 20:00

Present:

TTC Cllr Tim Bennett - Chair
GB - Totnes Ramblers
MC – Chamber of Commerce (online)
LW - Totnes Bike Hub
SG - Bob the Bus
VC – Kingsbridge Hill Area Residents Association
VW – Market traders
PW – High Street resident
RP - Transition Streets Plymouth Road
NF – Transition Streets Plymouth Road
RM – Bridgetown Alive!
PB - Transition Streets Plymouth Road
TTC Cllr Darren Peters
SM – South Street resident
FP – Transition Streets Plymouth Road
GED – Transition Town Totnes
LA – Moorashes residents
TTC Cllr John Cummings
Maiken Hutchings – TTC Sustainability Officer (SO)
SC – Inclusive Totnes
HC – Bridgetown resident and cyclist
RS– Upper Plymouth Rd resident

Apologies: JS, SHDC Cllr Sweett, DCC Cllr Hodgson

Actions:

- 1) SO to share the various traffic surveys via the mailing list
- 2) SO to get the latest information on signage improvements and bring to the next SG meeting

1. Welcome & brief introductions

- The acting chair, Cllr Bennett, welcomed everyone to the meeting. Everyone introduced themselves.
- The SO briefly outlined what the Forum and Steering Group are:
 - The Forum is an advisory body to Totnes Town Council

- It is a space for discussion (and attempts to resolve) issues relating to T&T and the transition to sustainable forms of travel in Totnes and the surrounding areas
 - TTC Cllrs seeks the views of the Forum on all matters of relevance to them but may not always choose to take the Forum's advice
 - Forum / Steering Group meeting notes go to the TTC Planning Committee before going to Full Council (if needed)
 - The Forum has established a smaller Steering Group (SG) drawn from the community which meets more regularly to progress work, and also to ensure that a variety of views/stakeholders are represented (especially during any voting)
 - Forum meetings are open to anyone but only Steering Group members have voting rights.
 - Forum meetings are quarterly (January, April, July and October) on the last Wednesday of the month. The Steering Group can choose to meet between this if they deem it necessary to progress certain projects.
- The Terms of Reference need updating. The SO invited comments and suggestions via email.

2. Agree minutes from previous meeting

- It was agreed to wait with confirming the minutes until SC arrived at the meeting

3. Chairperson report

- The SO read aloud the Chairperson report written by outgoing chair, John Scanlan
- See [Appendix A](#)
- SO added: signage improvements, KHARA proposal & The Lamb

4. Sustainability Officer transport report (attached)

- SO read out the key points from the [SO transport report \(Appendix B\)](#)

5. Election of Steering Group members

- SO briefly outlined the Steering Group member categories: Cllrs (max 4), citizens (max 5), community groups (max 5), businesses/traders (max 5), experts (max 5)
- Nominations for SG by category
- Elected SG can be seen below or in Excel document attached to notes on the TTC Traffic and Transport website
- It was noted that the Terms of Reference are not entirely clear on groupings of SG members and this needs to be considered in the update
- Maggie said the CoC would try to get three more business representatives on board

6. Election of Chair and Deputy Chair

- GB nominated by Cllr Bennett (no relation), GB elected Chair
- Deputy Chair post vacant
- GB took over chairing from Cllr Bennett. He thanked JS for chairing last year and highlighted the importance of partnership working. He thanked the Chamber of Commerce (CoC) for offering to try to get more businesses involved in the SG through the Chamber who aren't necessarily a part of the Chamber.

End of AGM

7. Totnes Bike Hub update

- LW gave an update from Totnes Bike Hub
 - It's been operational for approximately 16 months
 - Business and community arm
 - Service and repair shop, one full-time mechanic, one part-time mechanic
 - Community arm
 - Share building space with Resilient Lives / Pizza Pirates
 - About 11 volunteers
 - Workshops, led/social rides, pre-loved bike project
 - 26 bikes sold, 15 donated
 - 2023 plan is to expand on community activities – good space that can be utilised more often, more volunteers, more workshops, potentially link in with schools
- GB asked whether LW could be convinced to join the SG, which she eventually agreed to do.

8. Plymouth Road transition street survey

- The Plymouth Rd Transition Streets group shared their recent traffic survey with the group and explained some initial thoughts resulting from it
- See [Appendix C](#)
- A discussion followed regarding some of the points raised
 - A lot of traffic coming through High St before shops are open, which has air quality, noise and noise implications
 - A number of years ago the police did a stop action and apparently a lot of the people driving through were SHDC employees heading for Follaton House.
 - Speed also an issue
- Discussion around the issues not being isolated to the High St but the town as a whole, e.g., St Katharine's Way and Kingsbridge Hill

ACTION: SO to share the various traffic surveys via the mailing list (including KHARA survey)

- The feeling in the room was that a proper dialogue with DCC is key and that we need to secure a meeting with them.
- The issue of DCC officers not being familiar with the problems in Totnes was raised. It was agreed that there would be merit in stakeholders mapping out the key problem areas in town and attempts to describe the issues – as a way to communicate the issues felt by the whole town, not just the High St.
- It was agreed to hold a separate meeting to create such a map
- This could link in with a wider safety and accessibility audit/plan for town that the Town Council has voted to create

9. Cycle path signs

- Howard briefly introduced himself (cyclist, lives in Bridgetown) and talked about cycling safety and infrastructure
- Discussion of cargo bikes
- Discussion of road bike markings by Seven Stars which are fading away
- Something that can be discussed at a future meeting

10. Pedestrian safety priorities / KHARA update

- VC briefly outlined the Kingsbridge Hill Area Residents Association proposal and that they had attempted to get it through to the South Hams HATOC (Highways and Traffic Orders Committee) but that it has been refused
- KHARA have officially responded to John Fewings on the refusal
- There are some unanswered questions regarding what DCC's statutory responsibilities are on the type of road they are on

11. Wrap up

- RM brought up the issue of Bridgetown technically being a 20mph zone but that drivers regularly disregard this
- Lack of signage and road markings to indicate 20mph zone
- There are also safety issues with an increase in people crossing the road on Bridgetown Hill at the bus stop now that the Gold bus has been rerouted. Zebra crossing desperately needed.

- SC mentioned the signage improvement project across town and asked for an update on this
 - **ACTION:** SO to get the latest information and bring to the next SG meeting

- LA reiterated that maintaining the vibrancy of the town centre is really important – no one wants to lose the vibrancy of the shops and that we need to work holistically with the traders, etc.

Potential dates for the next Steering Group meeting to be circulated after the meeting.

Date of next Forum meeting: 26th April 2023

SO requested agenda items for the next meeting and reminded the group that the Terms of Reference need updating

End of meeting 20:05

Appendix A: Chairperson Annual Report

Chairperson Annual Report

Totnes & District Traffic & Transport Forum, TDTTF - April, July, October,
Steering Group, GTSG - February, May, November

The TDTTF and SG both met on 3 separate occasions over the past year. These meetings were held mainly at the Guildhall.

Notable topics and actions in these meetings

- Fore Street consultation
- Green travel survey
- Expansion of 20mph zone
- Totnes Climate Hub
- Bike parking map, racks and maintenance stand
- Bus routes and stops

Thanks for your support and participation whilst I have been Chair. I am required to be in London on Wednesdays when working so will rarely be able to attend in person going forward.

Chair - John Scanlan

Appendix B

Traffic & Transport Annual Report 2023

Sustainability Officer, prepared for Totnes & District Traffic and Transport Forum

1) Traffic on Fore St & High St – DCC discussions

January 2022: Public consultation into Fore St traffic calming measures

2022 kicked off with a proposal from Devon County Council (DCC) for some traffic calming measures on lower Fore St.

Totnes Town Council (TTC) was asked to send these out for public consultation. The consultation ran from January – March and consisted of a survey (online and hard copy) and in-person drop-in event.

The consultation report can be downloaded from the TTC website [here](#).

As a result, DCC asked that TTC organise a facilitated stakeholder meeting.

Facilitated traffic meeting – 13 September 2022

The traffic meeting was run by two facilitators independent of the Town Council. A lot of effort was put into trying to get a wide representation of people at the meeting, including businesses, residents and community organisations. Unfortunately, despite these efforts, Fore St residents ended up being underrepresented at the meeting. DCC had asked for the meeting to try to reach a consensus around what the key problems are in town. A key consensus emerged that through-traffic is a central concern by all.

The facilitators wrote a report outlining the meeting. This was discussed by the Traffic & Transport Steering Group in November 2022. The report and the SG's comments were sent to DCC in December 2022. We are awaiting DCC's response.

The report and SG's comments can be downloaded from the TTC website [here](#).

2) Other ongoing projects

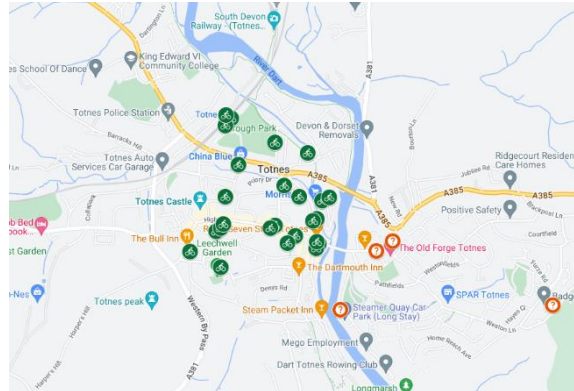
E-bike trial scheme

Totnes Town Council worked alongside Exeter's social enterprise, Co Bikes, to apply for South Hams District Council's Climate Infrastructure Fund to launch an e-bike trial in town. Co Bikes were successfully awarded £25,000 which will contribute four stations and eight bikes to support an already growing network which will total seven e-bike stations and 26 bikes across Totnes and Dartington. The trial is expected to start in 2023 and will run for 12 months. It is hoped the trial will prove the scheme is viable and enable it to become a permanent service in town with a wider offering.

Bike parking map

A bike parking map for Totnes and Dartington has been created, although only Totnes town centre is currently covered. If anyone knows of other locations, please email greentravel@totnestowncouncil.gov.uk.

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=1VuzGhPRdhC0I2RAUbqjDt77zx6DYjWE&usp=sharing>



Cycle links

Click here for basic overview of proposed routes in the immediate area:

https://umap.openstreetmap.fr/en/map/proposed-cycle-links-10_853181#13/50.4402/-3.6955

Riverford cycle route

Sustrans are in the process of creating a feasibility study for a cycle route that would run through Dartington Hall, Staverton and Riverford through to Buckfastleigh. This study is being paid for by Riverford. Completed feasibility study is expected in April.

Quiet Lanes

Attempts to get DCC support or guidance on creating a Quiet Lane (or even just introducing better signage) on the back road between Harbertonford and Totnes have so far been unsuccessful but it will continue to be pursued in 2023.

South Hams Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

South Hams District Council have been awarded over £1million from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities), some of which will be spent on creating a LCWIP for the area. This will be commenced in 2023 and Totnes will of course feed into this.

Totnes car club: E-cocars

There is an ongoing conversation about the future of Totnes' car club, E-cocars, as the person who currently runs it is stepping down. Conversations between E-cocars members, Bob the Bus and Exeter's Co Mobility are currently in progress to ascertain the best way forward.

20mph trials

Early in 2022, DCC opened up for applications for 20mph trials across the county, after the Newton Abbot trial was cancelled. TTC applied in March with the view to connecting up and extending the existing zones. Unfortunately we were unsuccessful (only 4 schemes were approved) but more schemes will go ahead in 2023/24 as a

further £150,000 has been secured in DCC's road safety capital allocation. We hope to be successful this time.

Climate Hub sessions

SO to trial a two hour green travel drop-in session at the Climate Hub.

Air quality monitor

Air quality monitor is being installed on the High St in February.

Traffic & Transport policy schemes, 2023 update

SO to create an update document for the transport schemes listed in the Traffic & Transport Policy.

3) Upcoming and potential projects in 2023

Active travel + public transport leaflet

SO in process of creating a leaflet – primarily aimed at residents of new developments – with an overview over active travel and public transport in the area. It would be a PDF document that could be printed if requested.

Engaging schools

SO working with Cllr Bennett to try to engage with schools to discuss active travel plans and improving air quality.

Green travel survey

Plans to launch a permanent online survey as a way to gauge interest for certain projects and for residents to comment/come with suggestions for new projects.

Town Plan / Walking & Wheeling safety audit

Exploring the possibility of doing a 'walking and wheeling safety audit' to determine key routes in town and how to make them safer (if needed).

Maiken Hutchings

Sustainability Officer

greentravel@totnestowncouncil.gov.uk

Appendix C

Upper Plymouth Road Transition Street and the Totnes Traffic and Transport Forum.

We are Transition Town Totnes Upper Plymouth Road (top of Narrows to the traffic lights at the junction with Western Bypass). Eight residents working to improve the quality of life in our street and town. For sustainable, common sense, human solutions to the many problems that confront us all. The cost of living; climate change; pollution; environmental degradation. And traffic in our street.

We are privileged to live in this wonderfully accessible part of town. But our experience, over recent years has been of an intolerable increase in traffic, generating significant noise and air pollution. Vehicles often accelerate along Plymouth Road as they leave the Narrows to beat the lights at the Western bypass junction. Just crossing the road can become, at times, seriously hazardous.

In November 2022 we undertook a comprehensive survey of traffic movements into Plymouth Road from The Narrows and Cistern Street over a twelve-hour period. Traffic from The Lamb into Cistern Street and the Western bypass was separately monitored at peak times.

The report has been shared with the Town Council and is an agenda item for tonight's meeting.

The survey provides proof of what we all know. Instead of using the bypass system, drivers are coming up Fore Street/High Street and the Narrows into Plymouth Road, and down from the Lamb and Cistern Street into Plymouth Road. Hundreds of vehicles per hour are clogging our street, thereby saving themselves perhaps a minute or two by short circuiting the bypass routes. Bypass routes that were built years ago to protect our historic town centre.

Drivers are not deterred by road signs indicating that entrance to the High Street is for 'Access only,' nor by the sign at the Lamb directing through traffic up to the Western Bypass. And they are aided and abetted by sat navs which direct their vehicles to the shortest route, mindless of the human consequences.

So, we say, something must be done. It must **just stop the rat runners**. The nature and scale of the problem is clear from our survey and from our daily experience. We know that this situation has evolved over many years. Some would say the Totnes traffic problem is intractable. But Totnes is a town renowned for its creativity.

Suggestions, including those put forward by some of the many people who showed an interest in our survey, are included in our report. It is difficult, however, to find any solution which will not be opposed by some interested party.

From a Plymouth Road perspective we would suggest that a 'No Right Turn' sign from the Narrows to Plymouth Road would achieve something for us and would, at least, hugely reduce the rat running to the benefit of the High Street as a whole. The cost, to the County Council would be minimal. A more comprehensive solution, however, should not be beyond the ambition of the town.

Transition Streets Totnes, Plymouth Road
January 2023