



## **Note of Launch of Bradford on Avon Air Quality Alliance**

### **St Margaret's Hall on Friday 1st February 2013**

A Welcome was given to all from Councillor Rosemary Brown, Chairman of the Bradford on Avon Area Board, who spoke of her involvement in the air quality campaign in the town for over 12 years, since the designation of the Air Quality Management Area in 2000.

An Introduction from the Chairman was given by Maggie Rae, Director of Public Health for Wiltshire and Corporate Director at Wiltshire Council. Maggie spoke of her delight at being involved in the launch of this initiative and of her wider work in air quality issues across Wiltshire. She had just come from a photo-call at the site of the new air quality monitor, at the Old Vicarage on Masons Lane, which was attracting much press attention.

Maggie introduced speakers who had been asked to provide updates on key areas of work agreed at a series of focus group meetings hosted by the Area Board in Summer 2012:

Allan Creedy, Head of Sustainable Transport at Wiltshire Council gave a progress report on a proposed Survey of Traffic Origin and Destination which would provide updated baseline information on traffic movements through the town. It had previously been suggested that a number plate recognition study could be carried out using a pool of volunteers. Allan reported that an opportunity had presented itself to expand the remit of a consultants study of freight movements through the village of Holt, commissioned to help assess possible options for change, in part due to the likely opportunities offered by the Hilperton Gap Relief Road in Trowbridge, and that this number plate recognition survey over an extended period would collect data of all traffic movements through Bradford on Avon. The extra costs of this expanded study were likely to be manageable assuming financial contributions locally from the Area Board and the Town Council.

David Moss, from the Bradford on Avon Preservation Trust, broadly welcomed the idea of a fully professional survey. He looked forward to looking at the proposal in more detail, as it would need to provide up to date information to allow the testing of possible approaches to managing traffic demand in Bradford on Avon (the previous survey was over 10 years old and questions had been raised about its methodology). David called for the investigation of radical approaches to the reduction of traffic, including a town wide ban on heavy lorries, an

emissions zone or a toll on the Town Bridge. Income from such tolls or emission zone levies could help finance wider use of electric vehicles or low carbon buses in the town.

Comments from the audience were largely positive, although some questioned whether the survey findings would be truly 'origin and destination' given that the survey would not be able to track the full purpose of each journey, just the resultant pattern of travel through the local area.

Gary Tomsett, Public Protection Manager at Wiltshire Council, spoke about the Survey of Nitrogen Dioxide and Particulates Emissions and the installation of the 'analyser' on Masons Lane which will measure in real time emissions of nitrogen dioxide and fine particulates to provide daily, weekly and hourly trends. His team is also exploring the possibility of traffic counts in proximity to the analyser. The findings from the diffusion tube monitoring between 2001- 2010 showed that nitrogen dioxide emissions at Masons Lane were of particular concern, being above the recommended levels and continuing to deteriorate. Thanks were expressed to the owners of the Old Vicarage for accommodating the analyser and also to Mr Salvat for hosting the equipment at his coffee shop over the last few years.

Gary reported that the next regular Air Quality Progress Report is due at the end of April 2013. An Air Quality Action Plan for Wiltshire is currently being drafted for submission to DEFRA, to include the work of other air quality management areas in Devizes, Salisbury, Westbury, Marlborough and Calne. Consultation has recently ended on the air quality supplementary planning guidance and the comments received will be published on the Wiltshire Council air quality web pages.

Rachel Kent, Environmental Health Officer at Wiltshire Council, spoke of a joint project with Public Health to create a new externally hosted website displaying real time data from our analysers. This could be combined with a text alert system to benefit those with respiratory conditions. Useful websites for further information can be found at:

[www.bristol.airqualitydata.com](http://www.bristol.airqualitydata.com)

<http://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/air-pollution/daqj>

<http://www.ricardo-aea.com/ubreathe/>

Martin Valetin spoke of his Survey of Public Health which has been collecting evidence from visitors to the Bradford on Avon Library for several months now. The initial survey findings include anecdotal evidence of poor health among residents and workers in Bradford on Avon including lung infection, dry throat, dry cough, sneezing, constant phlegm, itchy eyes, eczema, heart conditions and poor sleep. The traffic is a source of soot and noise, as evidenced by the pollution-stained walls in the town centre. Sufferers report that these health problems seem to go away when the individuals concerned are on holiday or in places with clean air. The survey has also found 52 cases of cancer and 162 cases of asthma, way above the Wiltshire average, which Martin suggested was indicative of a causal relationship to the traffic pollution in the town.

The Public Health team at Wiltshire Council were unable to comment on these findings pending receipt of the full survey analysis and methodologies.

Yvonne Bennett, Trading Standards Manager with Wiltshire Council, reported on the Enforcement of the Weight Limit on Town Bridge and explained that her role was to take prosecutions on behalf of Wiltshire Council Trading Standards to the Magistrates Court for those vehicles that had breached the 18 tonne weight limit on more than one occasion having received a warning letter for a first offence. To date three prosecutions of repeat offenders had been successful and more were in the pipeline. The vast majority of warned drivers do not re-offend.

Shay Parsons from Lorry Watch reported that Lorry Watch was currently operating on an informal basis but would revert to a full time watch for the months of March and September 2013. Over the past year the visibility of the initiative had led to a marked reduction in offences. The volunteers are hoping to carry out the administration of first offence notifications on behalf of Wiltshire Trading Standards, under license to the National Anti-Fraud Network.

Lorry Watch had also been instrumental in a project to install New HGV Advance Warning Signage around the town to give clearer notice to lorry drivers of the 18 tonne weight limit on the Town Bridge, as offenders repeatedly cited poor information as a major reason for bringing their overweight vehicle into the historic core zone of the town.

Shay Parsons from Climate Friendly Bradford on Avon talked about the Promotion of Electric Vehicles and the Renault Kangoo Electric Van which had been on loan to CFBoA during December. A total of 82 zero-emission Christmas shopping deliveries were made, saving 164 journeys into/out of town. The initiative attracted good local media and public attention, supported town centre retailers and the BoA Community Agriculture project. There is interest in repeating this exercise so long as the costs can be recovered. An Eco-Trade Fair on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> March will have a range of EV's on display.

CFBoA is lobbying for local developments such as Kingston Farm to include EV charging points within their infrastructure and for local B&B's and hotels to install charging points for use by their guests. Charging points will also be installed at Bradford on Avon railway station through funding from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund.

Discussions are ongoing with the Passenger Transport Unit at Wiltshire Council regarding any opportunity to convert the Town Bus to an electric service. The newest buses have a fast-charging capability and are used in the Coventry park and ride service, in Milton Keynes, Dorchester and elsewhere.

There is an aspiration for an EV Car Club although this will require infrastructure and probably private investment.

Kevin Sharpe is a local resident and MD of charity 'Zero Carbon World' which specialises in the promotion of electric vehicles and the roll-out of electric charging point infrastructure.

Kevin talked about 3 types of Electric Vehicles:

- All Electric Vehicle / Battery Electric Vehicle (EV/BEV)
- Plug-In Hybrid Electric Vehicle (PHEV)
- Hydrogen Fuel-Cell Electric Vehicle (HFCV)

DfT research suggests EV/PHEV could realise a 40% saving in CO2 emissions utilising the existing UK power mix. However, this could be increased substantially with more low-carbon power as the National Grid gets cleaner.

Electric Vehicles are built in low volumes today with mass production scheduled for the end of 2013 (e.g. Leaf, ZOE, PIP). The widespread roll-out and uptake of EV's and PHEV's will require:

- Increased consumer confidence and education
- Improvements in battery performance and cost
- Charging infrastructure (90% home/work)
- Market incentives to stimulate demand

The World leader in EV take-up is Norway where 5% of new car sales in 2012 were EV. Incentives there include no purchase tax, no road tax, no parking fees, no toll fees and access to bus lanes.

The DfT has undertaken detailed research into the impact of EV's and PHEV's on the National Grid through to 2030. There is sufficient national generating capacity today for 20 million EV's in the UK assuming demand is targeted at off-peak periods through smart metering and off peak tariffs.

The development of EV/ PHEV technology provides an opportunity for the UK to take a lead in the development and deployment of the new technologies required. There are national and regional opportunities for job creation throughout the supply chain including the development of batteries, internal combustion engines for hybrids, electric motors, control systems, energy recovery systems, battery recycling, and charging infrastructure. Also through 'Green Tourism'.

ZCW has donated 358 simple and reliable Charging Stations to the tourism and leisure industry to stimulate interest and to educate the sector. Note that this is with NO smart cards and NO government funding.

The goal is 100% renewable electricity – from a base of only 25% today.

Further information at [www.zerocarbonworld.org](http://www.zerocarbonworld.org)

The Chairman thanked all speakers and attendees for their contribution to a stimulating debate. The Next Steps for the Air Quality Alliance would be agreed by the Bradford on Avon Area Board at its meeting on 13 March 2013.

**Note taken by Peter Dunford, Community Area Manager**





Director of health Maggie Rae with Cllr Keith Humphries and, back row, from left, environmental health officers Gary Thomsett and Rachel Kent, MP Duncan Hames, Cllr Rosemary Brown and Cllr Linda Conley; inset, Rachel Kent (39811)

£45,000 gadget installed to detect dangerous traffic fumes

# Device will monitor air pollution levels

By Adam Care

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A £45,000 air quality monitor has been installed in Bradford on Avon, to measure levels of pollution in the town.

The device is one of four to be positioned across the county, which will provide hourly figures on air pollution to enable the council to keep track of traffic levels.

The monitor has been installed in a residential garden on Masons Lane, where congestion is a particular problem for residents.

It is part of a wider scheme to examine roadside pollution in the town.

A new working group, the Bradford on Avon Air Quality Alliance, has been established by Wiltshire Council and the local community to build on earlier successful initiatives like the Lorry Watch Scheme, which has secured four prosecutions for lorries flaunting the

weight limit on the town bridge.

Leader of the alliance Rosemary Brown, said: "I came up and asked the residents if they would be kind enough to put the equipment in their garden, and they said they would be delighted to cooperate."

"I am extremely grateful to them, it's a perfect location."

"We expect some really positive action after all these years - this has already been declared an air quality management area, but we hope to reach the Government air quality targets by 2016."

"I am delighted the council has supported us, as everybody has to play their part to make this a clean air town and ensure people's health isn't affected."

The station measures fine particles in the air, as well as the level of carbon dioxide, which is emitted from vehicle exhausts. It will be

checked weekly, with an engineer attending to recalibrate it every month.

Two similar monitors have already been set up in Devizes and Salisbury, with a fourth still to come in Calne.

Keith Humphries, Wiltshire Council cabinet member for public health and protection, said: "We have been monitoring Bradford on Avon for some time using diffusion tubes, but real-time monitoring can get us much more accurate information."

"Wiltshire is a beautiful rural county which doesn't generally have issues with air quality."

"However, we know where there is a build-up of traffic there can be pollution. We are taking it seriously and doing what we can to monitor those spots."

"This monitor is the start of a concerted drive to look at new ways of tackling 21st century issues in this historic town."

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