Notes from OxPA meeting September 2024

Traffic Filters presentation: Craig Rossington, Senior Transport Planner, Oxfordshire County Council

Traffic filters are needed in Oxford because there is too much private traffic on the streets, causing pollution, congestion, bus delays, and very poor conditions for pedestrians, wheelchair users and cyclists. A traffic filter is a camera-enforced feature limiting private cars from driving through, but not into or out of, Oxford. It is like the bus gate on the High Street but will be to stop private cars only. It will not stop motorbikes, emergency vehicles, taxis, or any vehicle other than private cars. Permits are available for transport to and from hospitals and care facilities, and automatic exemptions are applied to buses, coaches, vans and lorries. Local residents will have 100 permits a year, so will be able to drive through the filters around twice a week. In response to this the Bus Companies have invested in new electric buses which will glide smoothly and without emitting fumes.

There were thousands of responses to the consultations on this, the majority in favour. However, due to Network Rail’s delay in widening the Botley Road rail bridge, the start of the filters has been delayed and the timing of their starting is at this point unknown; it will be when Botley Road re-opens. Network Rail are finding their work under the bridge more complicated than they had planned for.

Some traffic will invariably be displaced, while some people will find they can switch to buses which will be much more efficient and faster with reduced cars on the roads. There will be no bollards, but cameras only on Hythe Bridge St, Thames St, St Clements, St Cross Road (all 7am-7pm), and Marston Ferry Road and Holloway (initially peak hours only).

Pedestrian crossings will be able to be made more responsive to pedestrians once the traffic is reduced.

The consultation on how it is going will start as soon as the filters are in and run for 6 months – however responses to the filters will be taken on for the whole initial period of up to 18 months – once the scheme has settled it will be seen how it will work longer term.

People in private cars driving through the filters without a permit will be initially issued with a warning, then fined £70.

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/trafficfilters