

BUS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN (BSIP) AT BACKWELL

Response to Survey from Members of Backwell Residents Association (BRA)

Introduction

BRA is a membership organisation with 452 member households who paid the annual subscription in 2024. This represents almost 25% of households in Backwell. Information on BSIP to, and consultation with, residents has been inadequate for such an important project in the village. The current proposals for Backwell are outlined in a 28 page document from North Somerset Council (NSC) dated May 13th.

Little has been heard from North Somerset Council (NSC) since a drop-in session in November 2023 at Backwell WI Hall. There is no formal route for residents to comment on BSIP proposals outlined in the above document, and BRA therefore decided to seek their views. Given the time constraints it was decided to limit the survey to YES/NO for the 4 main features of BSIP Backwell. The results are given below.

Summary of Results

255 households have responded to the survey which was emailed to members on May 16th. The response rate of 55% in such a short time is an indication of the strength of feeling within the village.

	Use of GPS to give buses priority	Installing a bus lane on Farleigh Road , Weston bound	Providing a new puffin crossing near the Leisure centre	Moving the crossroads bus stop to near the Post Office
Respondents in favour	161	5	155	46
% in favour	66%	2%	64%	19%

GPS Members were generally in favour of speeding up bus travel through the village, without the complexity of changes to the infrastructure involved in a bus lane. One reservation cited was that when the GPS gave advantage to a bus it could give a longer wait for pedestrians, prompting some light jumping, especially as the crossroads are heavily used by children from all three village schools.

Bus Lane This proposal has negligible support, and is fiercely opposed by the vast majority on the grounds of safety, cost, complexity and lack of space. The benefit of saving 58 seconds for bus trips **only during the peak hours** is a minor benefit compared with the damage caused by the creation of a short bus lane. Additionally the construction period of 6 months will generate queues and disruption, which would only be acceptable if the end product had any benefit. Comments have included :

- Aside from the disruption, child safety, and future traffic congestion problems, it seems an enormous waste of public money.
- Our representatives just can't see the bigger picture beyond buses.
- This huge mess is Clevedon seafront all over again.

Puffin Crossing This has majority support.

Moving the Crossroads (Bristol bound) Bus Stop near to Post Office

No plans have been shown for the exact location and of the impact on parking and access at this very busy area on both sides of the A370. Comments have included:

- Congestion would be exacerbated by cars parked outside the Medical Centre and Dentist, vital for the elderly and disabled.
- Congestion already ridiculous in & out to eg Post Office. Buses waiting would reduce visibility
- Do not put it near the Post Office/Chip shop. This is already a high-risk area for pedestrians.

Validity of Results

Care has been taken to make this a **sound** survey in contrast to ad hoc signed petitions.

- The survey relates to BRA member **households**. Where more than one person in the household has responded, only the latest response has been retained.
- There is an audit trail from the results table to the email address of the responder.
- Email addresses have been checked against the master database of members to eliminate any submission from non-members..

Conclusion

The survey shows a very strong total opposition to a bus lane in Backwell.

Serious safety concerns have been raised if the bus stop is moved near the Post Office. The detail of this proposal is vague in terms of access to the shops, impact on

parking spaces, pedestrian safety etc. These are fundamental issues , not minor details.

From the information provided in the 28 page document (which includes an illegible diagram in Appendix 1 on page 22), BRA members suggest:

Install a GPS system

Do NOT create a bus lane

Add a puffin crossing at a carefully chosen location near the Leisure Centre

Do NOT put a bus stop near the Post Office

Geoff Wells (qualified as an Associate by Institute of Statisticians)

BRA Committee Member

21.5.2025.