

Church Street and Prior Park Road

In summer 2022 Sustrans delivered activities aimed at widening community engagement in Bath & North East Somerset Council's Liveable Neighbourhoods (LN) programme. There was a focus on young people and families at schools, as well as with community groups, ensuring that resident feedback is incorporated into the design process.

Many of the ideas from the groups and individuals we spoke to are presented in the informal report below.

You can view the council's co-design workshop and exhibition report for this LN area at www.bathnes.gov.uk/yourLN

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Ralph Allen School

On 5th July 2022 Sustrans delivered a classroom session to 15 young people at Ralph Allen School. The session started with a presentation to provide the young people with an understanding of the liveability concept and the Liveable Neighbourhoods programme being delivered in Bath & North East Somerset. The first activity took the young people on a virtual tour of Prior Park Road, Church Street and Widcombe Hill to enable Sustrans officers to gather likes (blue sticky notes) and dislikes (red sticky notes).

Prior Park Road, Church Street and Widcombe Hill (virtual tour)

Map 1. Likes and Dislikes regarding Prior Park Rd, Church St., and Widcombe Hill



Dislikes (from sticky notes on map)

Claverton Street, Prior Park Road, Widcombe Hill Double-roundabouts

- Bad junction
- Long wait time on bus
- Long wait time to cross as pedestrian

Prior Park Road

- Cars pull out of driveways. Can't see you
- Narrow pavements
- Too dark at night
- Slippery [pavements]

Prior Park Road/Perrymead/Church Street/Ralph Allen Drive junction

- 2 footpaths [with fence in-between] – move fence
- Fence is good, although some walk around
- Blind corner – Perrymead

Church Street

- Would walk in the middle of the road – traffic slow
- Upper part of Church Street between church & Widcombe Hill (residential area): Very narrow street, cars parked on pavement mean you have to walk on the road

Footpath from Church Street to Church Lane

- Footpath can be slippery

Church Street/Church Lane junction (area around church)

- Potential spot for bench outside church
- No pavement (could be a problem)
- One participant's family park their car on Church Lane and then walk into town

Widcombe Hill/Church Street/The Tynning junction

- Unsafe junction – can't see cars coming
- If coming up the hill it's a bad crossing point
- Needs wider road so cars don't get stuck
- Needs some more pavement – cars very fast along Widcombe Hill

Widcombe Hill

- Nice area, but dark at night
- Buses get stuck and can be uncomfortable on the bus as the road is uneven

Likes (from sticky notes on map)

Prior Park Road

- Cleaner walls [than 10 years ago when Street View photo was taken]

Church Street

- Nice to walk down

Footpath from Church Street to Church Lane

- Like footpath

Sustrans Officer's Reflections

Most of the participants were familiar with Prior Park Road and Church Street prior to the virtual tour. Much of the discussion was focused on major junctions in the area – the Widcombe double roundabouts, and the junctions of Church Street with Prior Park Road and Widcombe Hill. All these junctions were perceived to be poor for pedestrians. The double roundabout was generally perceived to be confusing, and participants reported it can take a long time to cross when there is heavy traffic. The two junctions at either end of Church Street were perceived to be unsafe as both had blind corners and an awkward layout of pavements.

Many participants reported walking on the carriageway on Church Street due to the narrowness of the pavement and pavement parking, so an intervention such as a modal filter that prioritises pedestrian and cycle movement on the road may be justified.

Ralph Allen School (citywide)

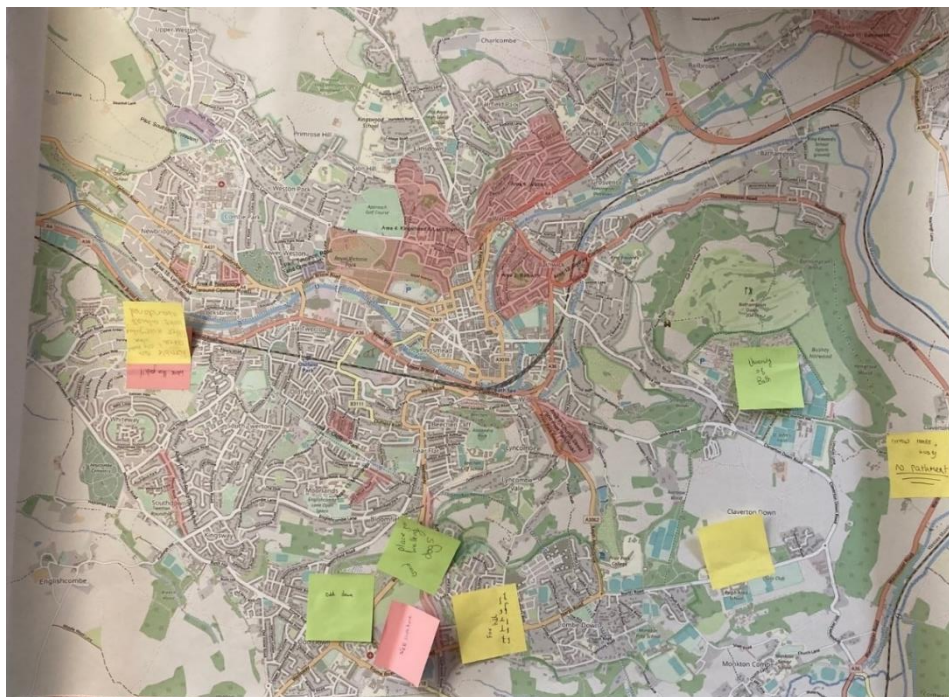
On 5th July 2022, Sustrans delivered a classroom session to 15 young people at Ralph Allen School. The session started with a presentation to provide the young people with an understanding of the liveability concept and the Liveable Neighbourhoods programme being delivered in Bath & North East Somerset.

Sustrans officers were aware that due to Ralph Allen School being a secondary school, the young people were likely to live in areas around the city of Bath and would possibly live in one of the Liveable Neighbourhood areas in another part of the city. So, the young people were provided with citywide maps which covered all the Liveable Neighbourhood areas and a number of other maps that focussed on just one Liveable Neighbourhood area e.g., Entry Hill.

Please see the 'Church Street and Prior Park Road' report to read what the pupils thought about Prior Park Road, Church Street, and Widcombe Hill.

Pupils were asked to sit at a table with the map that was nearest to where they lived or to focus on a citywide map if more appropriate. They were asked to identify their likes (green sticky notes), dislikes (red and yellow sticky notes).

Maps 2, 3, 4. RAS pupils' likes and dislikes across Bath



Comments gathered on citywide maps have been summarised by area and added to comments made on area specific maps, all comments are shown below along with the area specific map.

Entry Hill/Fox Hill/Combe Down area

Map 5. Entry Hill/ Fox Hill/ Combe Down area likes and dislikes



Dislikes (from sticky notes on map)

Wellsway

- Traffic, fast cars [around] Bear Flat

Entry Hill

- Entry Hill Golf Course: Good dog walking place
- Hard to drive, roads quite thin
- Litter in the field [Golf Course]

Midford Road/Frome Road

- Cross [Manufacturing]: Loud and mean workers
- Lots of traffic

Hawthorn Grove (Foxhill)

- [Needs] more green spaces

Queens Drive (Foxhill)

- Rubbish (old toys) area
- Rundown, kids play in the road

Fox Hill

- Dodgy and scary
- [Needs] more street lamps
- Not a nice place to walk at night
- Litter [problem]
- In Foxhill area: [needs] more trees and planters

Mulberry Park

- Mulberry Park School: no nice big outdoor space for playing

Combe Road

- More trees

Church Road

- Small school [with] no outdoor space. Should have made a big school in Foxhill and close down Combe Down [School] to make green space
- Too many cars parked; many put in yellow lines

Belmont Road/ Summer Lane

- Steep and uneven
- No one-way system, creates hazard for children

Brassknocker Hill

- Traffic – hard to walk up

Shaft Road

- Too many tight bends with cars going too fast and not being able to see

Claverton Hill

- Narrow roads and busy. No pavement!

Tynning Road

- Small road!! Lots of parked cars on pavements

Likes (from sticky notes on map)

Cranmore Place

- Nice area, lots of trees and greenery

The Firs

- Nice park, used a lot

Belmont Road/ Summer Lane

- Monkton Prep School Area: nice green spaces and quiet places

Rainbow Woods

- Peaceful, open

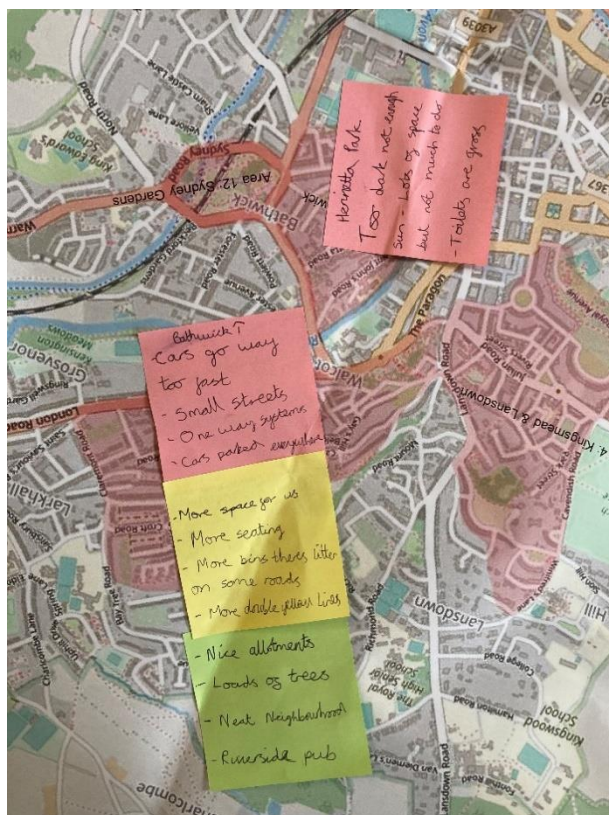
- Nice to walk through to be away from traffic
- Nice woods [but] lots of dog poo. Good paths

Beechen Cliff

- Nice views over Bath

Bathwick area

Map 6. Bathwick area likes and dislikes



Feedback (from sticky notes on map)

Bathwick in general

- Cars go way too fast, small streets, one-way systems, cars parked everywhere

- [Needs] more space for us, more seating, more bins (there's litter on some roads), more double yellow lines
- [Good things...] Nice allotments, loads of trees, neat neighbourhood, riverside pub

Henrietta Park

- Too dark, not enough sun. Lots of space but not much to do. Toilets are gross.
- Cleveland Bridge

Cleveland Bridge

- Bridge is affecting traffic flow and is a big inconvenience

Sydney Gardens

- Nice to walk through; good area to sit down

Oldfield Park area

Map 7. Oldfield Park area likes and dislikes



Issues/dislikes

Moorland Road

- Too many cars parked on side of road
- [Needs] Yellow lines

Likes

Two Tunnels Path

- Two Tunnels cycle path is good

Dislikes – Whiteway, Twerton area (not covered by LN project)

- Bath City Football area: horrible area! Litter everywhere, looks almost abandoned

Best place/worst place activity sheet

To gain a further understanding of the types of places young people liked to visit or did not like to visit near where they live, Sustrans officers asked the children to complete an activity sheet.

Places the young people disliked

- Foxhill – ‘Lots of litter, quite dingy, doesn’t seem safe’, ‘lots of rubbish, traffic, and dog poo’
- Queens Drive – ‘Rundown’
- Main road/ Bradford Road – ‘lots of traffic, litter and smells of pollution’
- Church Road (Combe Down) – ‘It has no yellow lines meaning cars are parked all along the side of the road making it a sort of a single car at a time road’, ‘there’s always people walking from one side of the other, which is fine but if they’re walking from car parking side they can’t see if someone is coming’ and ‘There’s lots of side roads popping out meaning you suddenly get people pulling out.’
- Springfield Park – ‘Unsafe’
- Clevedon Bridge – ‘There is so much traffic trying to cross the bridge, there are lots of parked cars either side of the road and nowhere to sit on the streets. Could do with

some trees.’ ‘Loads of traffic, waste of time getting over it and only quick way is the toll bridge.’

- Queens Drive – ‘Rubbish everywhere – plastic old toys and Rubbish bins tipped over’
- Dark tunnel in town – ‘It doesn’t smell good, It’s really dark and damp and lots of litter’
- Claverton Down Road / Cross factory [sic – Cross Manufacturing] – ‘In the way of a liveable place, loud at night and disruptive and mean people’, ‘The traffic is bad (Claverton Down), so loud (Cross engineering) and mean factory workers (Cross factory). Loud at night, fumes, and mean people.’

Places the young people liked

- Woodlands/fields around Combe Down – ‘It’s Quiet and good walks’,
- Beechwoods – ‘It’s on my road, there is lots of place to play with siblings and no cars usually come down my road so my brother (7) can walk on his own.’
- Woodland/countryside areas like Rainbow Woods, Beechwoods and Monkton Combe – ‘Nice, calming, and natural, nice variety for dog walking and very open for sports/games’
- Birchwood Lane [sic? – they might have meant Beechwood Road] – ‘It had lots of pretty gardens with lots of flowers and it’s quiet.’
- Mulberry Park – ‘Quiet, calm, not many cars and new and up together’,
- South Stoke – ‘It’s a big open area, with lots of fields and places to walk and lots of trees and nature’ ‘Nice views and pubs’
- Parade Gardens – ‘It’s very lush with vegetation, it’s calm and it looks nice’
- Monkton Combe/Rainbow Woods – ‘It has lots of trees, lots of people walk there and not too much litter’
- Sydney Gardens – ‘It has just been re-done and had loads of equipment, a good place for me and my friends to meet up and loads of space and places to run around.’
- Rainbow Woods – ‘It is calming and peaceful, lots of nature and away from cars and loud noises’, ‘It’s an open space and there is lots of nature and it’s very peaceful.’ ‘Long walks’
- Odd Down Sports Ground – ‘Sports teams/practicing’ and ‘Sports, BMX track and cycling track’
- The park off Entry Hill & Bradford Road, and Rainbow Woods – ‘The dogs, freshness and can go with friends’

Regular routes and destinations

Sustrans asked the young people to draw their regular routes on the map and indicate with a colour which mode of transport they used. They are summarised below:

Young people traveling from [redacted] walking to Ralph Allen School choose routes that generally avoid North Road. Young people choose these routes because:

- they 'know the roads and how busy they are'
- and the alternative roads have 'some nice scenery'
- and 'it is quick, and you don't have to walk on the main road too long. I can meet up with my friends [along the way]'

Another member of the group takes a route through Rainbow Woods and writes 'it's quiet' and 'we go through Rainbow Wood because it's away from the busy main road'.

When choosing to walk along North Road, young people say they choose it because:

- 'If I'm running late, I go straight along North Road'
- and 'it's quick'.

Young people when driven to Ralph Allen School or into the city centre as well as The University of Bath are driven along North Road (and Ralph Allen Drive) because 'it leads directly into Bath'.

Young people travelling from the city centre of Bath up to Ralph Allen School tend to travel by bus (probably because of the distance and the hill up to the school); one participant said the 'bus service needs improvement, [the bus] doesn't turn up at times.'

A young person who travels from the city centre to Odd Down Sports Ground said, 'Buses are ok, sometimes delayed by a lot [by] traffic [so] can be very late'.

General ideas for improvements

Sustrans officers used an activity to engage the children in developing ideas for improvements. The activity is called 'Council leader for a day', the sheet used the words:

'If I were Council leader of Bath & North East Somerset for the day I would
to make it a better place to live and travel for everyone.'

The young people gave the following answers:

- Take the rubbish off the streets – like old bikes and toys are dumped outside people's houses. I choose this because the rubbish makes the road look run down. Plant more trees and make like 'tree arches' like the 'tree arch' down the avenue
- Plant lots of trees on streets, take rubbish off streets, improve the quality of roads (try to fill as many potholes as possible). Add more greenery to some areas to make it look more alive
- Lighten some walkways to make them more bearable to walk at night. I would also widen some walkways so there is more room for people to walk
- Organise litter pick
- Involve high schools/primary school in helping the environment
- More community stuff
- Make cleaner
- Keep green areas green
- Have more parks
- Organise litter picks
- Bring people together
- Create fun, community places, e.g., trees, seating
- Make buses cheaper, better pay and make the schedule better and more consistent
- Plant lots of trees, pick up the litter from streets and give out free bus tickets. I would ban cars for the day and put more benches in. I would also put in more street lamps
- Add more street lamps. Add white lines in Foxhill so people can park properly. Add more crossings on busier roads like by Monkton where people come out Rainbow Woods. Make roads more accessible for cyclists. Stop people parking on the main road by Rainbow Woods (it makes a LOT of traffic)
- Make Claverton Down Road safer and put double yellow near Rainbow Woods
- Make Claverton Down Road slower and safer. Put new speed cameras and make the Rainbow Woods crossing safer
- Make Claverton Down Road safer for kids to get to school and easier for kids

- Make woods and green places more accessible for young people. Build bike paths around the area so people don't need to cycle on busy roads

Summary table

Popular topics	Number of times mentioned
More trees	4
Litter picking	4
Making Claverton Down Road safer	4
Street lighting	3

Sustrans Officer's Reflections

The participants tended to have a positive perception of areas with lots of greenery, and a negative perception of areas they thought were dodgy or rundown, with lots of litter or a lack of lighting. They also tended to have a negative perception of busy roads with lots of fast-moving traffic. These perceptions affected their behaviour, with many choosing walking routes that go through parks and along quieter roads, while avoiding busier roads – in particular North Road.

The negative perception of rundown litter-strewn areas also fed through into the proposed solutions that some participants came up with, with several 'Council leader for a day' suggestions focused on community action and litter picking.

The participants didn't focus on buses as much as other groups that Sustrans has engaged with as part of this project.

Widcombe Infant School and Junior School

On 20 July 2022 Sustrans officers attended Widcombe School to hold an engagement pop-up outside the Infants and Junior School entrances.

Outside the Infants school the focus of engagement was mainly with the adults who were collecting children, with A1 plans to the north and south of the school set out and parents were requested to use post-it notes to highlight features on the map:

- 1 Red sticky notes for issues/opportunities
- 2 Green sticky notes for 'interventions/what would you change'
- 3 Yellow sticky notes to highlight favourite locations

The engagement also included A3 sheets asking for individuals to describe their typical journeys.

The table outside the Junior school followed a similar format, though there were engagement opportunities for the children, who were asked to reflect on what changes they would make if they were 'Council leader of Bath & North East Somerset for a day'.

Infants school feedback

Maps 8, 9. Participants' issues, ideas for changes and favourite locations



Issues/opportunities

General Issues

- Big puddles, no draining, blocked drains, too much concrete. Suggest a rain garden.
- Lockable Bike storage on road
- One bus Station
- Not enough buses and/or they do not arrive on time
- Access to the river is limited
- Polluted
- Pavements are narrow
- Volume of traffic is an issue
- Speed limits
- Over saturation of parks and playgrounds for kids
- Traffic Issues and congestion
- Need to add more cycle lanes
- Canal is muddy
- Better timing for traffic lights, the wait for pedestrian traffic lights is too long.

Around the School

- There is only a narrow space to get to the canal near school
- Access with push chairs is difficult – crossing to front of school (lollipop), is narrow
- Parking on double yellow line in front of the school
- The crossing point near the school is terrible, no priority for pedestrians. Very busy during pick up and drop off. The wait at the red light is too long.
- Drivers run red lights at the crossings near Widcombe Schools – put in a camera
- The crossing outside the school has a traffic problem, there is no pavement, and you wait for ages.
- There are no separated bike lanes for school and/or proper places to park your bike safely unto the street.
- School traffic issues in the morning and afternoon on Lyncombe Vale

- Lack of green space just Alexander Park and near school, not enough equipment, and playground for kids (although there are two schools in the area).
- No cycling routes from Widcombe (Continuity)

Bathwick Street

- Crossings by Windsor Bridge are mostly ok, but one road has no zebra crossing and is hard to cross safely and is the only link to the main path.
- No idling before Cleveland Bridge
- Traffic and congestion near the bridge (one way)

Pulteney Road

- Speed restrictions on Pulteney Road
- Pulteney road has no lollipop crossing, speed restrictions need to be implemented.
- Crossing on top north parade road and junction with Pulteney road has no crossing at the end and cars go fast

Bathwick Hill Road

- Bathwick Hill Road – the pavement is very narrow therefore creates more traffic
- No cycleways on Bathwick Hill Road
- No crossing along the junction of Cleveland Walk and Bathwick Hill
- Prior Park Road
- Proper crossing is needed at the bottom of Prior Park Road, it is very dangerous without.
- Pavement is very narrow on prior park road
- Zebra crossing along prior park road

Other Areas

- Put in a proper crossing by the Co-op in Widcombe parade to give pedestrians priority. Add a camera as most bikes go on the wrong side of the road to avoid traffic.
- The Roundabout (on the A36 at Vane Street?) is busy and hard to cross
- Crossings by half penny bridge take too long for pedestrians and drivers run red lights

- Narrow Steps (near North Parade bridge) can't take a bike down the steps, difficult to get down to the river with a bike.
- Traffic on Combe Down In the morning
- Big problem to cross (Claverton Street?)
- Dangerous – massive cars from Paragon School, drive fast and without care and attention
- Better traffic crossing needed (at Rosemount Lane/Ralph Allen Drive)

Interventions/what would you change?

- No through traffic on St John's Road
- Less cars n route to Widcombe school
- Suggestion to only have road as school streets road in front of Widcombe school
- Add cycle path onto North Road
- No through traffic on North Road, create a cycle route
- Cleveland Walk with Bathwick Hill improve the crossing
- Lower Bristol Road needs a new cycling lane
- Add Bike storage onto the street at Sydney Buildings
- Add Electric car charging points
- Insert pelicans, change priority, and communicate pedestrian priority
- Rossiter road congestion traffic idling traffic, pollution especially during school drop off pick up – Widcombe school PTO – Children health concerns.
- Rework around crossings and traffic calming measures
- Make Rosemount/Fairfield one way or no through traffic
- Create a better crossing on Ralph Allen Drive near Rosemount Lane
- Limit access to vehicles, create a Park and Stride, and encourage car sharing and school buses
- Add a zebra crossing outside the co-op on Claverton Street
- Remove steps and replace with ramp on Pulteney Road



Issues/opportunities

- People drive too fast on Sydney Road/Sydney Place and there is poor visibility at the corner
- There are too many cars and traffic and lots of pollution
- Stop traffic on Archer Street at School times
- Traffic lights (on Claverton street?) take ages
- There is poor visibility at the roundabout at the bottom of Widcombe Hill a zebra crossing is needed as people try to 'zip round'.
- At the top of Bathwick Hill/North Road there is no safe place to cross the road and it is very busy
- In winter the canal path has big puddles in it, it is hard to walk
- Prior Park Road needs a crossing between Lyncombe Vale and Church Street

- Greenway Lane is a terrible rat run at peak times there is potential for the lane to be a 'green lung' prioritising cycling connectivity from residential neighbourhoods to the centre

Interventions/what would you change?

- Add stop signs around St John's Road and Bathwick Street
- Buses are expensive and slow. Could we have a train or more cycle lanes
- Tarmac the canal towpath to stop puddles & mud
- Don't push all traffic onto main roads (eg by schools)
- Add more trees
- Improve the provision for safe crossing of Widcombe Hill and Prior park Road eg Zebra crossing as it is dangerous for pedestrians AND drivers.
- It's a shame that they didn't add a cycle lane with white lines when they resurfaced Claverton Street
- Add a zebra crossing at the junction of Widcombe Hill and Prior Park Road
- Parking for the school in the Travelodge car park instead of at the school

Favourite places

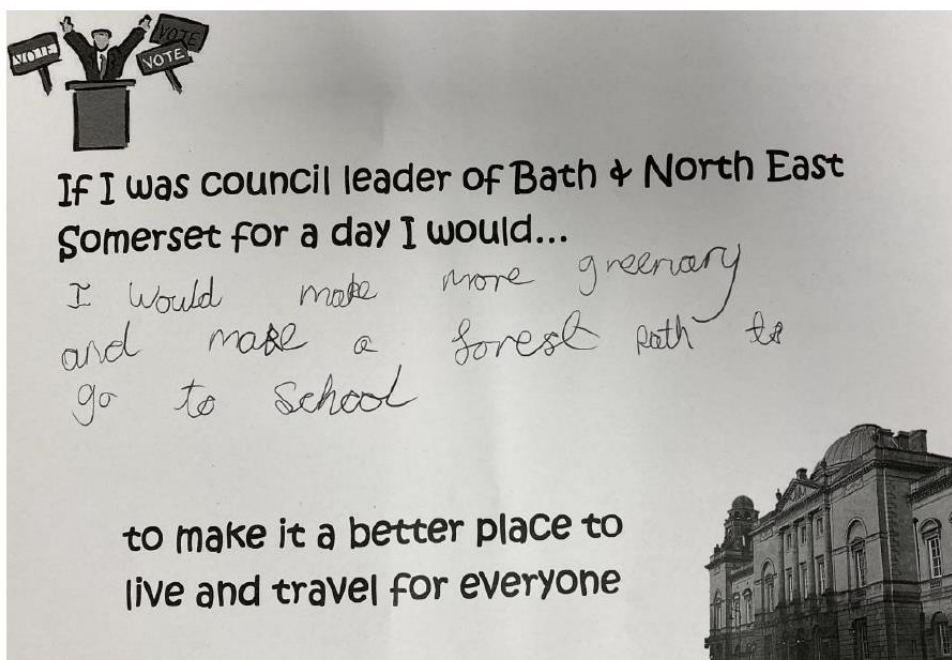
- Love the new playpark at Sydney Gardens, you can explore

Example Council leader responses

- I would make more greenery and make a forest path to go to school
- Make all streets in 'shopping areas' (Moorland Road, Widcombe) pedestrian priority
- Allow children (14+) to ride electric scooters
- Make more cycle paths and ski lifts
- Have 20mph limit across the whole city
- Provide free public transport to school children
- Listen to kids! (From a parent)
- Ban polluting cars
- Make a place/home for homeless people

- Make people not drive
- Tell everyone to walk and make traffic not go so they walk
- Put up a sign saying you do not need to drive, you can walk as well
- More cycle lanes around the city
- A conveyor belt down hills

Image 1. Example of a 'Council leader for a day' activity sheet



Local journeys

For this part of the engagement individuals were asked to draw one or two of their regular journeys onto an A3 map and indicate the following:

- 1 Mode of travel
- 2 Describe why they use that particular route

Fifteen journeys, typically from home to school were described as part of this engagement. A significant number of the responses were from people travelling from the Bear Flat area and mostly by foot, occasionally by bike. Two individuals specified car use for the journey, and two described bus journeys.