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North Somerset set to ban vehicles from some rural roads in a bid to encourage active travel



by Adrian Tatum

(<https://highways-news.com/author/atatum/>)



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North Somerset Council is planning to ban traffic from some roads as part of plans to promote active travel.

The council has now applied for a traffic regulation order to prohibit the vehicles in particular HGVs and has started a consultation as well. It said this could help its aim to increase walking and cycling across the district by 200 per cent by 2030.

There are also plans to look at introducing physical measures to reduce traffic, although this will be subject to further consultation in the Bristol Post.



The plans are included in the authority's Active Travel Strategy with the vision to make 'walking and cycling the natural choice for a cleaner, healthier and more active North Somerset.'

Essential motor vehicle access would still be allowed to homes and businesses in the affected areas.

A council spokesman told Bristol Post: "To support our strategy, our intention is to address rat running and inappropriate use, especially HGV use, of our rural lanes network while continuing to allow essential motor vehicle access to frontages and businesses.

"The council is proposing to restrict access by motor vehicles to the lanes between Clevedon, Yatton, Nailsea and Backwell in order to promote and enable greater active travel, particularly walking and cycling.

"For example, residents, landowners, businesses, pubs and hospitality venues will continue to have motor vehicle access for all their needs and those of visitors, clients, employees and suppliers and customers.

"The resulting reduction in the traffic will create a more pleasant, inviting and safer environment for active travel while preserving the rural nature of the area and providing protection from increasing traffic growth resulting from further development pressures."

The plans – known as the Rural Lane Active Travel Enforcement Scheme – will be funded with money from the Department for Transport's Active Travel Fund.

The measures could also be supported by reducing speed limits, introducing 'entrance gateways', traffic calming and introducing physical measures to close roads to vehicles.

Council bosses say the desire for safer walking, cycling and horse riding routes was highlighted as a result of the first national lockdown as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, said the Bristol Post report.

The spokesman added: "This will build on the huge demand for cycling and walking routes that was demonstrated in the first covid lockdown.

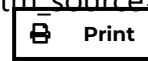
"By going through this process we expect to transform the feel they become a viable option for many more local residents to the communities connected by this rural network.

"Most journey lengths within the area will be perfectly suited to cycling but the lanes will also be attractive to pedestrians and equestrians and improve access to the countryside.

"This will build on the huge latent demand for cycling a was demonstrated in the first covid lockdown."



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