

## *‘People Friendly Streets’, friendly for some, not for others*

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We had an excellent response to the Canonbury Society survey in December regarding the Canonbury West Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) scheme with more than 300 people taking part, nearly 180 of whom are members. Below are some of the survey’s findings.

The responses largely reflect whether people were affected by the rat runs of through traffic avoiding Highbury Corner. Around 65% of respondees in Canonbury Park North and Canonbury Place said there had been a marked improvement since the scheme came into operation, whereas overall 54% of participants said that things were worse. Canonbury has a significant proportion of elderly residents (14% of those surveyed), with 6% being blue badge holders and at least 41 people sheltering.

On the positive side, the peacefulness of the area without through traffic and the Council’s efforts to encourage cycling and walking were viewed favourably. Many were happy to trade these benefits for a few longer car journeys in and out of the area. Twenty-eight per cent said that they had used their cars less since the scheme started and 25% thought they would cycle more.

However, there was unease that **‘People Friendly Streets’ are only friendly for some people**. Undoubtedly, residents, businesses, pedestrians and sometimes cyclists on main roads are being adversely affected by the increased traffic congestion and pollution. There was particular concern about the effect of the scheme on local shops, such as Shriji News and Canonbury Dry Cleaners.

Residents said car journeys often took between 10–15 minutes longer. Some found it harder to call taxis to their homes. A number mentioned confused delivery drivers arriving on the wrong side of the filters, and the disruption of vans and lorries turning round by the filters. The dangers of mopeds riding onto the pavement to evade cameras on Canonbury Place and Alwyne Road was another recurring theme, as was speeding traffic on Alwyne Villas, Grange Grove and Canonbury Park North.

In addition, the Council’s lack of consultation, the slowness of buses caught in traffic, the perception of an increase in crime, the poor and ugly signage, and the level of congestion and pollution on main roads were mentioned repeatedly. (As traffic volumes begin to increase residents on Compton Road report traffic is backing up during the morning rush hour with vehicles trying to avoid congestion on St Paul’s Road.)

We are aware that our members and Canonbury residents have varying views. However, most seem to favour measures to stop traffic taking a short cut through the area, provided they can continue to use cars or taxis when necessary, without long detours and holds-ups. For this reason, we have decided to push the Council to allow residents, blue badge holders, black cabs and health professionals free access to the area by using number plate recognition technology.

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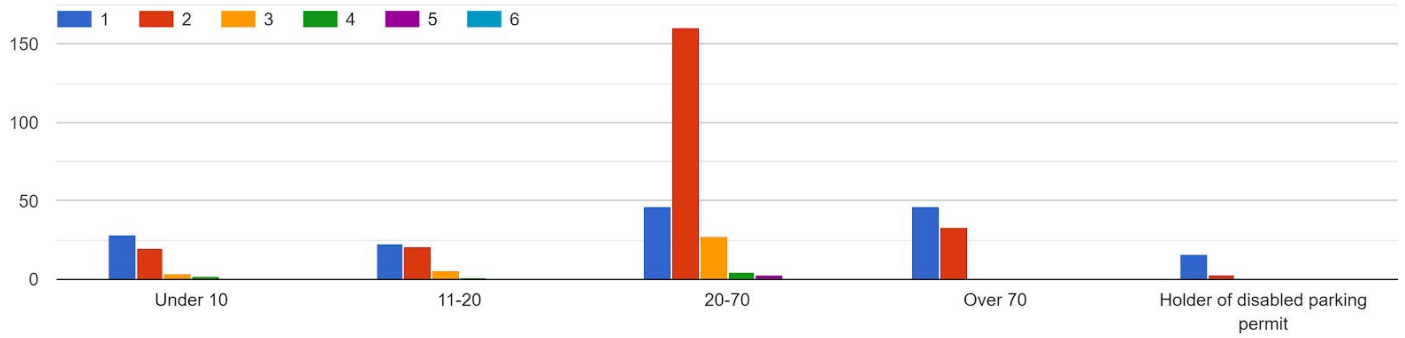
*THE CANONBURY SOCIETY CALLS FOR TRAFFIC EXEMPTIONS USING ANPR*

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When the Council showed the Society's traffic committee proposals for the Canonbury West LTN, we argued strongly that traffic filters should be on the St Paul's Road boundary of Canonbury, operating only in morning and evening rush hours. This was rejected by traffic modellers on the grounds that the Council's plan was not to have timed restrictions, except around schools. We then asked for automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) exemptions to allow residents to drive in and out freely. This was also rejected, although cameras now in place could easily be adapted for this purpose. Now, we are calling again for the Council to use ANPR technology to allow exemptions for **Canonbury residents, blue badge holders, black cabs** and **health professionals** making home visits.

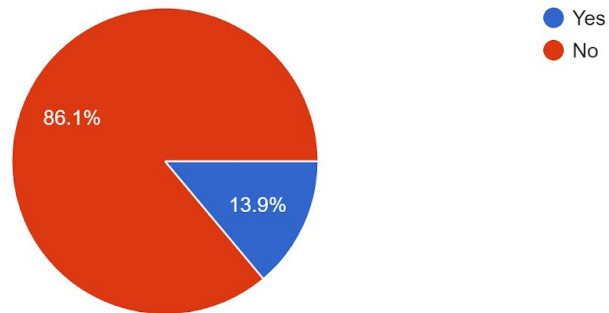
We plan to conduct a second survey in September to see if people's views have changed. We will also have further talks with the Council and keep a close eye on the outcomes of various legal cases regarding LTN schemes.

Number of people in household who are:



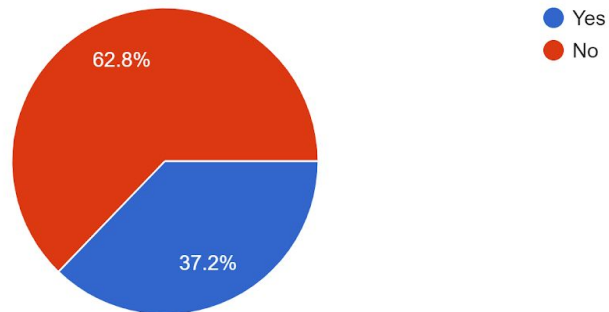
Is anyone in your household in the Shielded Group?

295 responses



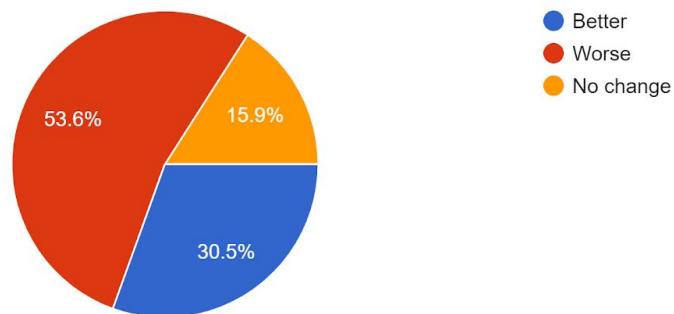
Before recent road closures, was passing traffic often a nuisance in your road?

301 responses



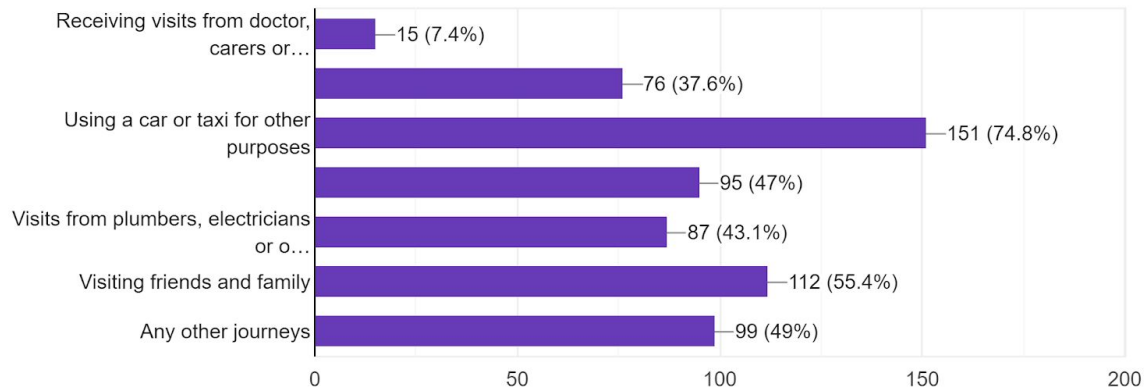
Have the new traffic restrictions made things:

295 responses



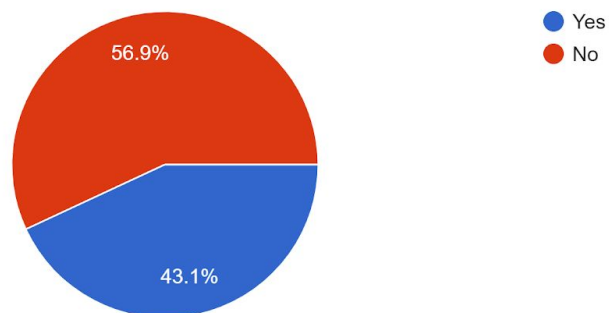
Please indicate if you have had serious difficulties with any of the following since the new traffic scheme was introduced:

202 responses



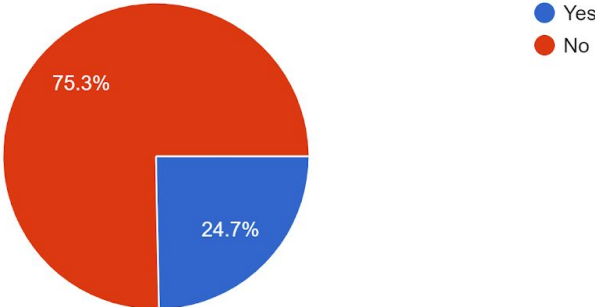
If you are a cyclist, has the traffic scheme improved your cycling experience? (leave blank if you do not cycle).

137 responses



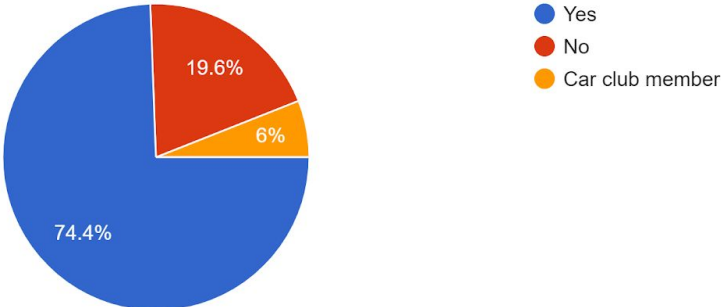
Will the scheme encourage you to cycle more?

243 responses



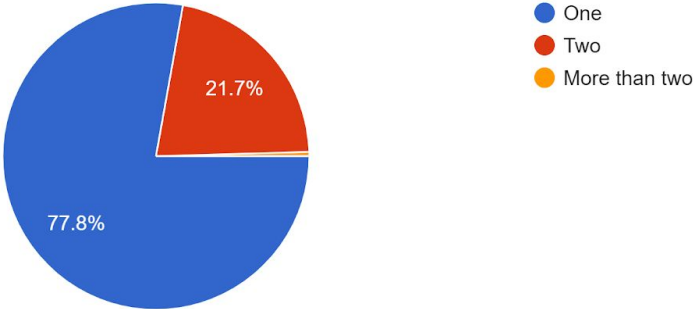
Does your household own a car?

301 responses



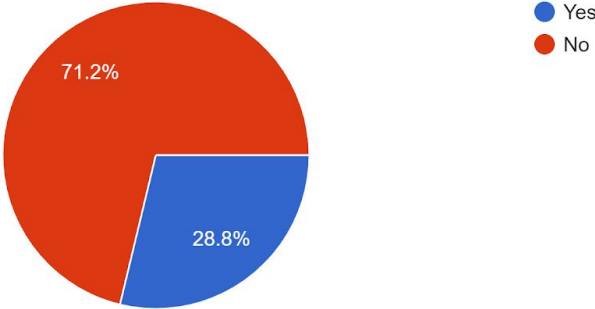
If yes, how many cars does your household have? (Leave blank if not a car owner)

221 responses



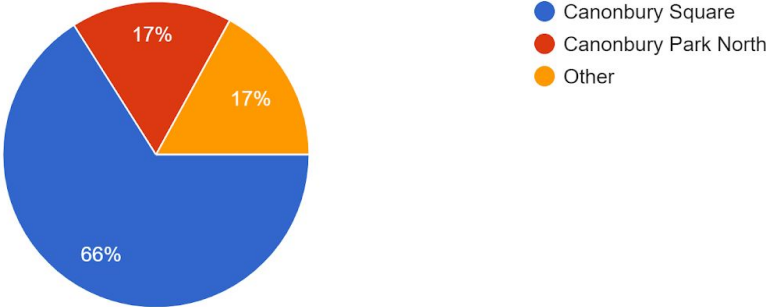
Due to the changes, do you think you will use your car less? (Leave blank if not a car owner)

226 responses



Before the traffic scheme started, if you were driving out of the area were the bulk of your journeys via Canonbury Square or Canonbury Park North?

253 responses



Would you like to become a member of the Canonbury Society?

286 responses

