

# **ROADS AND TRANSPORT GROUP REPORT FOR TEDDINGTON SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 17<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2007**

## **1. Teddington Police Custody Suite – additional cells still a possibility**

Most members will have attended the 22<sup>nd</sup> January meeting at the Baptist Church may have left the meeting thinking that the Police had not done their homework, had completely failed to carry out anything resembling consultation, and that our opposition to their proposals was strong enough to ensure a complete withdrawal of all the Custody Suite proposals. This is not the case. The original proposal for a 30 cell Custody Suite to be shared between Richmond and Kingston Divisions has been dropped, and other premises are being sought. If, however, suitable alternative premises cannot be found, there is the possibility that an expanded Custody Suite for Richmond Division alone could be installed in Teddington. There are currently 5 cells at Teddington, but not in regular use. The Society, along with the Teddington Action Group (TAG), is opposed to any such expansion.

The R&T Group's research identified that the Police had failed to account for the amount of time arresting officers would be missing from the beat, and the time it would have taken to transfer some 10,000 arrestees to a centralised Custody Suite through our heavily congested streets each year. In some ways, an even greater problem for local residents was the proposal that there would be no on-site parking for the 100 or so staff that would be on duty at any one time. In theory, all would be arriving on public transport or by bicycle, something that was unlikely to happen. There is little or no spare capacity on local roads, and there is a total of only 175 parking spaces in the four local council car parks – any spare capacity that there is available must be saved for shoppers who are coming to Teddington to support our hard pressed local shops and businesses – not for incoming commuters.

## **2. Teddington Town Centre Improvements Study 2001/2002 – outstanding issues**

When last in power, our current administration set in motion this much welcomed Study, which encouraged local residents to work alongside Council Officers to identify how a rather neglected, but still attractive Teddington, could be made an even nicer place to live and work in, without destroying the unique character which brought us all here in the first place.

Residents at the March 2001 Landmark Centre meeting made two very clear points; one, that they welcomed the promised full and open consultations; and two, that the spread of Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs) being proposed by Councillors, Officials, and a tiny number of residents, was not at all welcome. Support for CPZs in Teddington as a whole (postcode TW11), is estimated at 6% of households. About 40 residents volunteered to take part in the various working groups that were set up.

We were very fortunate to have Colin Tether, a very experienced Traffic Engineer as our main contact and team leader – unfortunately he has now retired – a great loss for the borough. As a result of various group walkabouts with Colin, one key requirement was identified, that was to create a “joined up” community by providing a continuous pedestrian friendly link, with safe crossing points, between the High Street and Broad Street. Good progress was made until funding was suddenly withdrawn when the administration changed, leaving entry treatments for The Causeway, Elleray Road, and Coleshill Road on the back-burner. We continue to press for these safety schemes to be completed. Safety schemes for the Causeway/Park Road junction, Coleshill and Queens Roads, which were started under the Study, were however, eventually put into place.

## **3. Further Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) consultation to take place**

At Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> April's Area Consultation Meeting at Bullen Hall, Councillors announced that a third CPZ consultation is to take place shortly. This time, two small areas immediately around the station are likely to be the centre of the consultation which will offer the possibility of a two hour zone. As part of the Teddington Study, a Residents' Working Party produced a comprehensive Parking Report at the end of 2001 (see the Society's website for details), which identified these two small areas as the only places in the whole of Teddington where parking was sufficiently difficult to justify some form of controlled parking. Unfortunately, local Councillors rejected the Report's recommendation that residents in these clearly defined areas should be consulted on two options; one, a two hour permit controlled CPZ; and two, free turnover parking in the numerous “Community” parking spaces in the area – both of which

would have automatically excluded rail commuters from these areas, and the latter would have allowed local residents access to parking spaces throughout the day. The Report also recommended that the excessive yellow lining should be reduced, and that Normansfield Avenue (postcode TW11), which is empty all day, should be removed from the Hampton Wick CPZ. This would provide free parking for the Broom Road area commuters who currently drive to Teddington Station and allow them to use Hampton Wick station instead.

The minimal safeguard provided by the 30% (stage 1) and 33% (stage 2) minimum voting criteria for the introduction of CPZs has been scrapped by the new administration, giving the Cabinet Member for Transport a fairly free hand to approve CPZs even where only a very small proportion of residents are in favour. This is why we recommended the following at the Transport Consultative Group Meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2006:-

1. That all future CPZ consultations and re-consultations should include an analysis of the number of Community Parking Spaces within the consultation area in order that an assessment of potential vehicle displacement can be made.
2. That all future residential CPZs should be limited to property frontages, even though this may mean that only one side of a road is within the CPZ.
3. That all CPZ consultation documents be subject to checks on impartiality and neutrality by an independent assessor.
4. That the CPZ voting rules should be simplified to encourage greater participation by residents and businesses.
5. That the penalty regime be reviewed to avoid, for example, the £22,000 fines imposed on 582 motorists who parked for a few minutes in just one almost empty CPZ just off Broad Street whilst buying newspapers etc. during 2004/5.
6. That a system based approach be adopted for future CPZ consultations with the current state of play disclosed on the Council website (as per planning applications).

I asked Councillors at the ACM to ensure that the Study Parking sub-Committee members and the Teddington Society R&T Group members are consulted about the content and design of voting documents, and the area chosen, to avoid possible future disputes and confusion.

#### **4. Teddington Society policy on Controlled Parking Zones**

The Teddington Society's policy on CPZs is that:-

- they should only be introduced as a last resort when all other options to alleviate serious parking problems have been tried and failed;
- the CPZ boundaries should be tightly drawn to minimise vehicle displacement;
- they should not include "Community" parking spaces (i.e. spaces that are not outside property frontages, but on flank walls, along park boundaries, or by railway lines etc.);
- they should normally include some free short term turnover parking spaces;
- they should normally be limited to two hours, timed to suit local residents; and
- they should be designed to minimise adverse effects on local shopping centres by ensuring that some free, or low cost Pay & Display visitors' spaces are available.

#### **5. Teddington CPZ consultations rounds one and two – the lessons to be learned**

A consequence of the rejection of the Residents' Parking Report recommendations, almost six years have been lost. A new administration took over, and tightened up the voting rules to ensure that the views of a minority did not override the rights of the majority, whether for or against a CPZ. We believed those new rules to be reasonable and fair (and still do), but they made the selection of the consultation area critically important. Include too many roads that did not have parking problems, and the votes of residents in roads that did have problems represented a minority view and their problems were not addressed. On the other hand, unqualified acceptance of the views of residents in areas where there are problems, and not taking the contrary views of residents in the roads surrounding those areas into account, is equally unfair, and could lead to sequential vehicle displacement and unnecessary expense for residents in those roads who previously had no parking problems (as has happened in Kew and elsewhere where "Community" parking spaces have been automatically included in the CPZ – the "one brick creating many ripples in a millpond effect").

It only needs 20 vehicles (equivalent to 100 metres of kerb space) to be unnecessarily displaced into an adjoining road to start this knock-on effect, which may not dissipate until a point about one kilometre away is reached, leaving the intervening roads having to seek CPZ status as the same 20 vehicle "ripple" passes through. Careful research into parking patterns and origins of vehicles, plus proper management of available space, can limit this problem. If two very small CPZs designed to ensure guaranteed minimal displacement were to be proposed for Teddington station area, there is a reasonable possibility of this being acceptable to residents in surrounding roads – subject to Normansfield Avenue and parts of Sandy Lane being available to soak up displaced vehicles.

### **5.1 Round One – 599 votes and one petition go missing**

Completely unbeknown to the new Cabinet Member for Transport, Councillor Mark Kreling, the application of the new rules in the round one consultation had led directly to the unauthorised exclusion of 599 mainly anti-CPZ votes (28.4% of those cast) from residents of the areas east of Cambridge Road, and in the York Road/Shacklegate Lane area. This unauthorised exclusion produced a theoretical pro-CPZ vote of 30.9% of votes cast, which under the new rules, was just enough to justify a round two consultation provided that it represented a majority of the vote – but it didn't, 58.8% of the included votes were anti-CPZ. In addition, an anti-CPZ petition from the York Road area which should have been produced to the Cabinet Member for Transport has never surfaced. An additional problem subsequently identified in round two, was that some double counting had occurred in round one due to the uncontrolled issue of additional voting documents and the acceptance of electronic votes, without any form of checking to prevent double counting.

In spite of the criteria for a second round consultation not being met, at the request of residents of Victoria Road who turned out in force at the 26<sup>th</sup> May 2004 Transport Consultative Group (TCG) meeting, Councillor Kreling agreed that a second round consultation should take place.

### **5.2 Round Two – much better, but still problems occurred**

A new council team was appointed for the round two consultation. Unlike round one, where there was absolutely no contact or consultation of any sort with the Residents' Parking sub-Committee or the Teddington Society before the consultation exercise, Parking sub-Committee members, Teddington Society R&T Group members, and Victoria Road residents, were invited to attend meetings at which early drafts of the consultation documents were reviewed. There was no discussion on the consultation area boundary which was apparently agreed between Councillor Kreling and local Councillors. None of the consultees were happy with the selected boundary which could have resulted in a much larger than necessary CPZ had there been sufficient support. Unfortunately, as none of us saw the final drafts of the consultation documents, a number of errors crept in, the most serious being an incorrect definition of the voting criteria, which led residents to believe that by not voting, they were effectively voting "No" to a CPZ. I wrote to local papers to correct this error and encourage residents to vote, irrespective of whether they were for or against a CPZ.

At a Transport Consultative Group meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2005, Councillor Kreling ruled that there was insufficient support within the second smaller consultation area for CPZs to be introduced. Support for CPZs is around 6% in Teddington (postcode TW11) as a whole, was under 9% in the original consultation area, and almost 15% in the final consultation area.

Cllr Kreling did, however, approve the review of yellow lining around the station, so that new, off-peak turnover spaces would be available for residents after commuters have gone to work, but did not approve the removal of Normansfield Avenue, Teddington, from Hampton Wick CPZ. Unfortunately, Councillor Kreling resigned a few months later, which left many transport issues, including parking, in limbo (but see 6 below).

## **6. Yellow line and corner safety and accessibility review**

After much pressure from us, council officers agreed to a joint walkabout with a view to sorting out numerous outstanding transport issues in central Teddington, to identify unnecessary

yellow lines either side of the station, and to ensure that all corners were kept clear to allow wheelchair users and others could cross roads safely. This walkabout, led by opposition Councillor James Mumford, took place on a very wet 24<sup>th</sup> August 2005, and we identified 42 items needing action. Some time later, the agreed freeing up of yellow lines and corner marking proposals were advertised in the local papers, and were expected to go ahead before the local council elections. Unfortunately, they didn't, which was a pity, as they may have improved the parking situation around the station to such an extent, that a CPZ would not have been necessary – we shall never know. Since then, all the agreed yellow line recommendations except one (six new free turnover spaces outside Teddington Cheese), have been put on hold. We now know that this is due to the impending CPZ consultation, but does not explain why the very short corner disabled accessibility and safety markings have not been put in place.

### **8. New policy on parking charges - an end to Gas Guzzlers?**

The local newspaper letters pages have been full of complaints about the introduction of increased CPZ permit charges for vehicles perceived to produce large amounts of Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), particularly four wheel drive and multi-purpose vehicles, but also including some vehicles that are generally regarded as being reasonably eco-friendly. Some very small "green" vehicles will get free permits, and others will get discounts on the basic cost. The new charges take no account of whether a vehicle is used every day to commute to work, which produces a lot of CO<sub>2</sub>, or it is a "gas guzzler" that sits unused throughout the week, and is only used for a few short trips each weekend – producing very little CO<sub>2</sub>. Most "green" vehicles are produced on the other side of the world, so taking the CO<sub>2</sub>, energy used, and environmental costs involved in manufacture and shipping, they may not be as eco-friendly as claimed – certainly not enough to justify a free parking permit. Do members have any strong views on this subject?

### **9. Crossrail – Teddington Society replacement proposal**

We are still advocating a new fast service from Kingston that would eventually terminate at St Pancras or Stratford, which would use current track, signalling and rolling stock. Our proposal is that the current Silverlink half hourly shuttle service between Clapham Junction and Willesden Junction should start at Kingston. This would require liaison between Silverlink and Southwest Trains, but Silverlink is already working with another operator to provide a direct Clapham Junction to Stratford service, so there is no reason why further cooperation with SWT should not take place.

We are also proposing that when Eurostar leaves Waterloo on 14<sup>th</sup> November, that a new service to Heathrow should be provided – this would use the Wimbledon loopline as far as Twickenham, then reverse out to Feltham to connect with airport bus services.

### **10. Cycling**

The uphill section of off-road cycle track by the old toilets in Broad Street, designed to by pass the roundabout on the top of the railway bridge has just been completed – this was approved in 2002 as part of the Teddington Study safety scheme. Various other cycle routes are under discussion, most are short sections, with no through connections. Susan Scorer has joined the R&T Group as our cycling expert, and we are reviewing various routes, including proposed new Route 168 from Teddington Lock to Hampton and Sunbury via the High Street. We consider the High Street too dangerous for family cycling, so are reviewing several alternatives to get to Bushy Park, which is to form part of the route. Ideally, we would like the footbridge between Station Road and Clarence Road to be replaced by a wheelchair and cycle friendly bridge, similar to that at Linden Grove. This would allow several safe cycle routes from the Broom road area to reach central Teddington safely, using Pelican and Zebra Crossings where main roads have to be crossed.

Brian A Holder 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2007