



**This letter has been endorsed by the following organisations:**

- Climate Action Leicester and Leicestershire
- Leicester Friends of the Earth
- Caritas Leicester and Leicestershire
- Muslim Green Guardians
- South Highfields Neighbours
- Transition Leicester
- Extinction Rebellion Leicester
- The Red Leicester Choir

23<sup>rd</sup> Sep '24.

Dear Cllr Waddington, Cllr Whittle and the EDTCE Scrutiny Commission,

We're writing to you on behalf of Climate Action Leicester and Leicestershire and the other organisations listed below in support of 24-hour bus lanes.

Leicester has high levels of poverty and an associated high level of households without cars. These are people who depend on buses and active transport to get to work, school and other places. Many of our low-income communities are also exposed to higher levels of air pollution than wealthier communities. The Council needs to stop prioritising car use, which privileges those with more resources and cars, and instead support everyone to use buses and bikes which are available to far more people.

There are 3 key reasons why keeping (and developing more) 24-hour bus lanes is so important when it comes to tackling climate change and supporting both public and active transport in Leicester:

1. As well as enabling the smooth and reliable running of buses, dedicated 24-hour bus lanes provide a safe space for cyclists. Many people only feel able to cycle on busy roads where active bus lanes exist. For less confident cyclists, a cycle lane without physical segregation is not enough to feel safe - a bus lane is. We desperately need more people to feel able to choose to cycle rather than drive, and 24-hour bus lanes are an important part of that.

2. In order to reduce our carbon emissions, we have to get people out of their cars. This means using a carrot and stick approach. Bus lanes do both - they take space away from cars and they facilitate bus and bike travel. There is a [considerable](#)

[body of research](#) that shows that allocating space away from cars actually reduces car use, and does not simply move traffic into other nearby roads. This because it encourages people to choose alternatives to driving. Part-time bus lanes do not send a clear message to change transport mode – full-time bus lanes do.

3. Which brings us to clarity. In order to get people to use buses, the buses need to be able to run smoothly and not get stuck in traffic. Bus lanes need to be full-time so that people are fully aware of them and are clear that this is not road space they are allowed to drive cars in. While signage is useful, a large part of driving is about memory. One's memories of driving in, and of seeing others driving in, a part-time bus lane make it harder to remember they are space allocated to buses and bikes rather than cars. This in turn makes people more likely to forget not to drive in them during the active times of day.

Finally, we want to remind you that low-income households without cars are often more susceptible to air pollution as well as being more dependent on buses. They are also the people most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change (as well as contributing to it least). Climate change impacts everyone, but not equally, and Leicester City Council needs to prioritise acting to minimise carbon emissions and building climate resilience. 24-hour bus lanes are part of this.

Best wishes,

Zina Zelter (Climate Action Leicester and Leicestershire)