

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS AND MYTHS ABOUT LOW-TRAFFIC NEIGHBOURHOODS (LTNs)

“DISPLACED” TRAFFIC BUNGS UP THE MAIN ROADS

There is some concern that LTNs increase congestion and therefore pollution on main roads. The evidence shows this not to be the case. It can take months for traffic patterns to settle but medium-term “traffic evaporation” (<http://rachelaldred.org/writing/thoughts/disappearing-traffic/>) is well-evidenced. Around 15% of displaced traffic disappears from the area entirely as drivers adjust routes and behaviours – avoiding the area, changing travel modes or even cancelling journeys. The result is a couple of minutes extra on some residents’ journeys as they have to drive further around the edge of the LTN before entering but little substantive change to main road congestion. Refer also to the Waltham Forest Village scheme – <https://enjoywalthamforest.co.uk/work-in-your-area/walthamstow-village/comparison-of-vehicle-numbers-before-and-after-the-scheme-and-during-the-trial/>

“DISPLACED” TRAFFIC MAKES OTHER NEARBY RESIDENTIAL AREAS WORSE

Often the opposite is true, as cut-through drivers give up on a route because it is disrupted by a LTN. Where through traffic is an ongoing issue in a neighbouring residential area, the installation of a LTN nearby can stimulate residents demand for a similar scheme.

LTN SCHEMES DISADVANTAGE EMERGENCY SERVICES, THE MOBILITY IMPAIRED AND THE ELDERLY

Emergency services have generally been very positive about LTN schemes. They are statutory consultees and typically see no change in response times. On balance, the elderly and mobility-impaired benefit considerably from having quieter and less car-dominated streets in which to live and to use.