

Low Traffic Neighbourhoods in Canonbury East opens to public consultation

As the Canonbury East Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) opens to public consultation the issue continues to drive an increasingly polarised population into conflict.

Councillors and council workers met with members of the public outside the Rosemary Branch pub this bonfire night to consult on the continuation of the LTN in the ward.

This in-person meeting was the first in a series of consultations taking place throughout November, concluding with a Zoom meeting on November 22.

Councillor Clare Jeapes told *Islington Now* that the LTN's were 'marmite' in how they divided people yet that "it's something we have to do"

Adding that "unless the number of vehicles is dramatically reduced, we're not going to hit 2° let alone 1.5°...it's an absolute crisis."

The meeting itself was frequently disrupted by aggressive opposition to the proposed changes, and concerns about public hostility were common among council workers.

"There are people around who have a reputation of being quite aggressive" said Joe Graham, a member of the transport team, "there was a worry that they would turn up tonight; they can be quite unpleasant."

Another member of the transport team, who requested not to be named, told *Islington Now* that some residents had been "threatening and obnoxious" at previous meetings. Adding that a member of the public "took a knife and cut [down]" many of the placards advertising the consultation.

However, this impression of division may be misleading said Julie Pilchon, a member of the Council's People Friendly Streets Team.

"It's polarising, but only for a few people" said Pilchon "not a lot of people care".

While Pilchon says that she "doesn't like the narrative of division" she also speaks to the toll that facing increasing hostility has taken on those who work for the council.

"When you're facing daily frustration, it is hard to keep going... officers are burning out. I keep the big perspectives in mind but the day to day can be very draining."

The consultation is set to conclude November 30.