

## **“Frankly unbearable”: LTNs under fire from disabled residents**

Low Traffic Neighbourhoods have placed an unacceptable burden on the disabled in the community claim residents and campaigners.

Edward Cripwell, an advisor and campaigner at Disabled Action in Islington (DAII), said that the measures intended to reduce traffic and pollution are “frankly unbearable” for disabled people and ignore “the rights of marginalised groups”.

Cripwell told the *Islington Now* how the proposed Blue Badge LTN exemption has not only been delayed but is also insufficient. The exemption will allow a single vehicle to pass through the camera enforced traffic filters into the area a resident lives, but does not extend access to places of work, amenities, or allow family members access.

Only after the LTN’s 18-month trial period, the Blue Badge holder exemption will come into effect. “Every single day that a disabled person does not have access to that exemption is another day of pain and suffering,” Cripwell said.

According to the latest Community Insight Report 17% of Canonbury residents had some form of limiting long-term illness. Slightly higher than the Islington average.

Andrew Martin, who has limited use of his arms and legs, lives within an LTN. He said that driving was essential and that the LTN was making it hard for disabled people to live their lives.

Before the introduction of the LTN, Martin said that he “never really thought about being disabled” but that there are now days when he will “just not go out”.

Martin is also sceptical of the provisions provided by the Blue Pass exemption. The provision does not allow him to get to his workplace, located in an LTN where he is not a resident, and also restricts access to vital services.

Additionally, Martin told *Islington Now* that access to physiotherapy has been limited, because therapists cannot drive to the homes of disabled people even under the new exemption.

Speaking about a young disabled person living in a LTN, Martin said that the council was “snatching away that child’s opportunity to have the life I had” by limiting their access to vital physiotherapy.

Another person living with disabilities within an LTN, said that she cannot drive but relies on her sons to drive her to care for her elderly mother. Liz said that the introduction of the LTN has “blocked us in”, turning a five-minute journey into a 50-minute ordeal.

In another case, Liz said that “it was life or death” when one of her sons had to drive through the camera filter to reach her in time. Her son received a fine for this, but Liz didn’t want to fight the appeal due to the sensitive and personal nature of the circumstances.

Interim monitoring reports released by Islington Council said that the seven LTNs established in Islington since the beginning of the year will “make things safer, healthier, greener and fairer for everyone” and “are likely to be bringing widespread benefits to Islington’s most vulnerable residents”. The Council’s report also shows that local traffic within the Canonbury West LTN had fallen on average by 46%, consequently reducing pollution.