

## **Wera Hobhouse MP**

Picture a city centre where residents and visitors alike go about their business, enjoying the fresh clean air, the clean streets and the clean buildings. There are very few vehicles around, and those that you can see are either electric or modern, clean engine vehicles. There are lots of cycle stands. We have the cleanest buses on the road. Children above a certain age walk and bicycle safely to and from school. People have genuinely sustainable alternatives for making short journeys in Bath of 1 – 2 miles. Visitors to our beautiful city arrive in Bath on public transportation, knowing that they do not need their cars to appreciate what we have to offer.

If we like the sound of that city; a city that is open for business, yet is a clean, safe place to live and work; then the question we must ask ourselves is 'how do we get there?'. How do we get from where we are, a congested, polluted city, with its heritage being slowly eroded, to our vision of what Bath could and should be like?

We can break that down into smaller questions, for example:

- What have we done to stop all those cars and lorries from driving through the city centre?
- What have we done that makes people of all ages feel safe cycling around the city?
- How are we moving large numbers of people during peak times?
- How have we encouraged the take up of electric vehicles?

In fact, there are lots of questions, but it is the answers that will take us from where we are to where we want to be.

I believe that we will have to use both the carrot and the stick, and that may mean some tough choices for the city and for all of us as individuals. We have to make the polluters pay, but at the same time we must offer alternatives, and some of those alternatives may be radical solutions.

The important thing to remember and to communicate clearly is that it is all for a reason; to get to where we want to be. We will need to encourage and reward behavioural change so that it becomes deeply embedded.

I believe that those of us with influence must work together to build the greatest possible consensus, amongst the residents and the business community, that what we are doing is right for Bath.