

Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs)

LTNs, areas where roads are closed to through traffic, are not the answer to cutting noise on the worst-affected roads. Noise falls within the LTNs but levels can increase on the adjacent boundary and main roads. Many of these roads, most of them residential, have seen an increase in traffic since the recent spate of LTNs was introduced.

Unlike older LTNs, which tended to cover just better-off areas, many of more recent ones include poor places as well as rich ones but there are real equity concerns around their impact on boundary and main roads. In London, where the bulk of the research has been carried out, 8.5% of the population lives on main roads; that is, about 720,000 people.



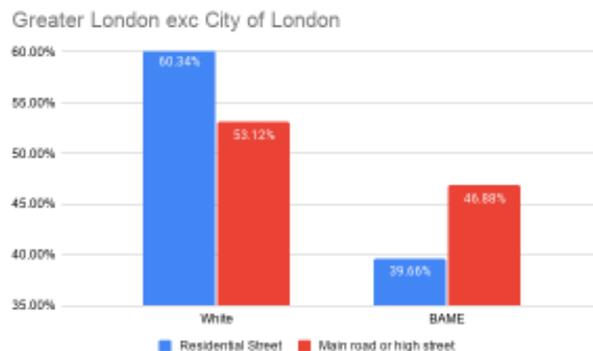
LTNs create quieter neighbourhoods but often at the expense of more traffic on adjacent roads

Environmental Injustice

Many of us spend a lot of time on main roads: at work; at school; shopping and socialising; waiting for buses; meeting friends; simply walking. Poor & BAME communities are most likely to do so. Little money, and very often no car, means they leave their own neighbourhoods less often than wealthier people do. It is interesting that the residents of main roads are rising up, really for the first time in decades, and saying 'enough is enough', with many of campaigns being led by members of the BAME communities.



Poor & BAME communities are most likely to live, walk, wait for buses, learn & play on the 'main' roads



Many of the recent LTNs were put in with the best of intentions, with councillors looking for ways to improve the environment for their residents. Some of the councils are now considering plans to tame the traffic on the main

and boundary roads. But it is a post-code lottery, with main/boundary road residents fearful they will be left with the spillover traffic for ever.

Main roads are already the noisiest and most polluted. There are strong health and equity arguments to tame traffic on these roads first. LTNs are doing the opposite. Without real efforts to tackle main and boundary road traffic, LTNs simply worsen the noise problems on the roads where noise is at its worst.