TO: letters@oxfordtimes.co.uk

FROM: Hazel and Steve Dawe – COWLEY AREA TRANSPORT GROUP: [www.catg.org.uk](http://www.catg.org.uk)

53 Bulan Road Oxford OX3 7HU – 07747 036192 – 29th January 2022

Dear Editor,

The suggestion that Oxford is about to have the ‘world’s first Zero Emissions Zone,’ is not accurate (Oxford Times, 27th January). What Oxford will actually be implementing, in a very small area of the City which is already either pedestrianised or has very low traffic levels, is an ‘Ultra Low Emissions Zone’- not a ‘Zero Emissions Zone’ – which will be similar to the one in London. Refuse trucks, resident’s cars, emergency, utility and construction workers’ vehicles will all be entering Oxford’s so-called ‘Zero Emissions Zone’ and adding to its air pollution. In addition, research indicates a number of cities around the world which already have a variety of policies classified as ZEZs. (1). The term ‘low emissions zones’ is more accurate, for the Oxford zone and such zones are widespread (2).

All of the terms used about areas with lower traffic emissions refer to tailpipe emissions, not ‘non-exhaust emissions’ such as: particles from brake pads, tyre abrasion and vehicle erosion of road surfaces. These include toxic ‘particulate matter 2.5s’(3). Since these have been estimated to be responsible for about 5% of deaths in the UK, we should recognise that only pedestrianised areas can be ‘Zero Emissions Zones’ for all traffic emissions. With Oxford having the worst decline in shops and shopping in the pandemic, in the south east region(4), we need a much larger Ultra Low Emissions Zone than planned and a big increase in our pedestrianised areas which will encourage more footfall for shops. We also need colour-marked cycle tracks across central Oxford. Bearing in mind that 3300 cyclists have been hurt in collisions in Oxford over 20 years (Oxford Mail, 29th January), we need much more ambition from our City and County councils on air pollution, pedestrianisation and cycling than they have shown so far.

Yours sincerely,

Hazel and Steve Dawe

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Notes:

1. See: <https://www.polisnetwork.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/6.E.-Lucy-Sadler.pdf>
2. See: <https://urbanaccessregulations.eu/low-emission-zones-main>
3. See: <https://www.blf.org.uk/taskforce/data-tracker/air-quality/pm25> & <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/air-quality-statistics/concentrations-of-particulate-matter-pm10-and-pm25>
4. <https://www.oxfordshirelive.co.uk/whats-on/shopping/oxford-shops-among-worst-hit-6537617?utm_source=oxfordshire_live_newsletter&utm_campaign=daily_newsletter2&utm_medium=email>