To: letters at Oxford Times

From: Hazel and Steve Dawe **(1)** – COWLEY AREA TRANSPORT GROUP – [www.catg.org.uk](http://www.catg.org.uk)

9th January 2023

Dear Editor,

We have received a rather strange and misleading leaflet entitled ‘Hello Guinea Pig’ about the proposed Traffic Filters. Some responses:

15 Minute Neighbourhoods, in which people have access to a lot of the services and shops they need, already exist throughout Oxford and they exist throughout the UK in virtually every town. Many people in Oxford certainly walk, cycle and use buses within such small areas. After all, just under a third of households in Oxford do not have access to a car. The idea that the only way to undertake many journeys for the able-bodied is to use a car is simply wrong. Local businesses do benefit from as many locally-based customers as they can get. We conclude that people are not being made ‘Guinea Pigs’ for something novel or problematic.

Although the traffic filters are to be introduced on 6 major roads to help reduce traffic congestion and air pollution, the leaflet implies that many journeys require that these roads be used. This is not the case. For example, online deliveries, including by cargo bike, can substitute for more of Oxford’s short car journeys. Nowhere can cope with traffic increases that may be as high as 51% in the future, according to the Department of Transport.

The worst aspect of the leaflet is Climate Change denial. Being against Traffic Filters is bad enough, especially as no alternatives for traffic reduction are offered. However, over 80% of people are rightly concerned about the Climate Emergency and are often taking action. In Oxford, both City and County Councils and a wide range of local groups and individuals, are engaged. The authors of this leaflet really need to go back to school for some basic geography and science.

Yours sincerely

Hazel and Steve Dawe **(1)**

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Note:

1. Steve Dawe taught Environmental Policy for the Open University and about both Climate Change and the Environment in a variety of social science courses as a lecturer in a number of universities up to retirement.