

# *Usk Town Council*

The Sessions House, Maryport Street Usk NP15 1AD



15<sup>th</sup> June 2008

Dear Residents of Usk and business owners and workers in Bridge Street

As your newly appointed Mayor I wanted to keep you updated on how Usk's new Town Council is taking action on the HGV and air pollution problems in the Town

At Usk Town Council's June meeting, the recently elected Councillors expressed their strong desire to listen to the electorate and take firm action to deal with the increasing problem of HGV's using the Town as a short cut and causing a danger to the public as well as contributing to the already high levels of air pollution in Bridge Street and Castle Parade.

It was reported at the meeting that Usk Police had previously advised 70% of issues raised by the Public at recent surgery open days related to the concerns of higher numbers and larger vehicles using Bridge street. Such concerns were confirmed with the Usk Bridge again being damaged by a long HGV and the entrance to the town being marred by the sight of an orange fluorescent plastic fence.

Councillors were informed of the need to replace the current 3 traffic orders to enable restrictions to be easily understood and fully enforceable. Monmouthshire County Council has commissioned Highways Consultants Capita Simmons to undertake a commercial vehicle survey, to report the findings and make recommendations for a new traffic order. It is expected that this is to take place in mid summer. Councillors expressed the need to introduce higher penalty fines for breaking any new traffic order, better signage well before Usk to allow vehicles to avoid Usk or turnaround where appropriate.

A radical approach to enforcing any new traffic order was proposed by way of funding an additional Police officer in the town. Councillors accepted that the views of the public would need to be sought as any cost would likely to be funded by higher local precept charges.

Councillors were delighted that representatives from Monmouthshire County Council have commissioned the traffic survey and have agreed to meet us which we believe demonstrates the importance of this issue to the future economic viability of Usk. It is encouraging, but naturally disappointing, to hear the unacceptable levels of HGVs using Usk as a short cut and clogging the street or bridge when they meet, have been scientifically linked with the high levels of air pollution in the same area. Given the links between the problems, the Town Council has been asked by the Central Monmouthshire Area Committee to lead a task force to tackle the illegally parked vehicles in Bridge Street that cause the resultant stationary idling vehicles to cause the pollution.



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As a Council, we recognise these are sensitive issues but we are determined to tackle them in a positive and sympathetic way to all relevant parties and work with them to resolve any concerns that these essential changes may bring. There are far too many occasions when we see vehicles having to mount pavements to pass each other and the instances of members of the public being clipped by wing mirrors is concerning. Combined with the air pollution problem, which requires solutions to be presented to the Welsh Assembly Government, it is understandable that so many of you have expressed your concerns to the Police and directly to Councillors during the recent election. We reluctantly accept that these matters will not be solved quickly but they rightly remain at the top of our agenda as the future economic viability of the Town is at risk if no action is taken.

Yours faithfully

Cllr Tony Kear  
Mayor Usk Town Council

For any queries please contact

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