

**“Scrap Expressway” say experts**

Plans to build an Expressway between Oxford and Cambridge should be scrapped immediately. Instead, opening of the rail line between the two cities should be brought forward and be electrified from the outset.

At the same time, new housing in Oxfordshire should be located where it can be best served by public transport, and should also be more closely targeted to meeting existing housing need.

These are some of the recommendations put forward by a group of transport and planning professionals with many years’ experience of working in the county.

Noel Newson, formerly chief assistant engineer at Oxford city council, said: “The plans for Oxfordshire must take account of the climate crisis. It is folly to be building major new roads which will only add to carbon emissions. Instead we should be planning to locate new housing where people don’t need to use a car for their every need. And of course you don’t need HGVs to transport ideas between leading universities.”

The group is writing to all of Oxfordshire’s MPs and county and district councillors. It is recommending a re-think of the plans for Oxfordshire currently being developed by the Oxfordshire Growth Board.

Amongst their other recommendations are changes to the way in which new housing is built and allocated. “No-one can deny that there is real housing need in Oxfordshire” says David Young. “But that will not be addressed by building expensive houses in the green belt around Oxford that will be snapped up by London commuters. There needs to be a change in government policy to provide genuinely affordable housing to rent or buy.”

Note for editors:

The group is called POETS.  
(Planning Oxfordshire’s Environment and Transport Sustainably).

See over the page for information on its membership.

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**POETS**

**Planning Oxfordshire's Environment and Transport Sustainably**

The group includes:

Katie Barrett, formerly planning policy manager at Vale of White Horse District Council, local plans officer at South Oxfordshire District Council, transport policy manager at Oxfordshire County Council

Bob Bixby, formerly transport planning course director, Oxford Brookes University

Chris Cousins, formerly head of sustainable development at Oxfordshire County Council

Noel Newson, formerly chief assistant engineer at Oxford City Council, group manager for sustainable transport at Oxfordshire County Council

Gill Oliver, formerly planning policy manager, South Oxfordshire District Council

Gordon Stokes, honorary visiting research associate at Transport Studies Unit, University of Oxford

Ian Walker, formerly spatial planning manager at Oxfordshire County Council

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