

Tensions rise over Ixelles road closure

January 2025

A battle over mobility around Ixelles' ponds has restarted following new Deputy Mayor Gautier Calomne's vow to reopen Square du Souvenir to cars.

His announcement two weeks ago in a [BX1 radio interview](#) was criticised by Bernardo Rodrigues, a member of the Green-Socialist coalition that closed the road before it lost control of the municipal council in elections last October.

"The police strongly backed our decision to close the road between the ponds because of several accidents in the area" Rodrigues told me on Sunday. "Many of the changes we made were pragmatic and don't make much sense to overturn."

Square du Souvenir, which cuts through the commune's picturesque ponds, was one of several areas where the Green-Socialist council introduced pedestrian- and bike-friendly measures, including new cycle lanes, car-free zones, and 30kmh speed limits.

The political jousting over the ponds has reignited a debate between local residents who want the convenience of car access and others who want quieter, safer spaces in a popular recreation area of central Brussels.



Square du Souvenir in January 2025

Calomne, whose Reform party promised ahead of the election to bring back access for cars, told BX1 its plan would "reduce traffic for local residents".

While car friendlier policies are likely over the next six years under Calomne's administration, the road for now remains pedestrianised.

The debate reflects deeper tensions across Brussels over whether urban ambitions that critics brand as a "war on motorists" have gone too far.