

Spokes Public Meeting 18/3/2021 7.30 to 9.30pm

# Spaces for People – the Future

*Over 150 people in this meeting*

## Dave Intro

Lots has been put in place on temporary basis in a very short time. Full consultation is needed – gathering **all** views. Growth of car numbers registered, size of cars, pollution, congestion, road danger (use of SatNavs), subsidy of petrol, etc. ALL without any consultation.

## Cllr Lesley Macinnes' Presentation

£5m, to spend **fast with max impact**: had to be through already understood projects.

Now considering the move to **more permanent which will look different**: higher quality materials, detailed designs tweaked, more solid segregation. Still introducing a couple **more temporary measures** soon: Segregation on Lanark Rd and more space for peds and cyclists on Broughton Street. In line with **wider plans**: City Mobility Plan, City Centre Transformation and Active Travel Action plan, all designed to more sustainable travel, to decrease pressure on things that have negative impact on quality of life and to help meet net zero carbon emissions targets.

**Changes needed around**: 20 mins neighbourhoods, road safety, health improvements through active travel, and reducing CO2. **Wide consultation** needed: extended by two weeks to April 5. Alongside market research with a cross section of people (emailing 100 stakeholders and community organisations). **Next**: Analysed responses to Transport and Environment Committee in June – How it fits with overall plans and goals. If accepted, start Traffic Reg Orders with 21-day period to allow for comment and complaints. There is lots of misinformation. We are comfortable and confident with our current processes (legally and otherwise).

## Phil Noble's Presentation

**Changes implemented**: Segregated cycleways needed as an alternative option to public transport (buses risk of transmission and running on limited timetables. Safer cycling necessary. Other measures also to mitigate crowding/risk of infection. Linking up existing infrastructure (e.g. Comiston Rd lanes feeding into a route into town, reduced speed to 30mph. Around schools: road closures, access regs, pavement extensions, school gate removals/redesign. Spaces for Exercise (e.g. Silverknowes, now redesigned, Portobello parking, Crossing at Mayberry)) **Early feedback**: lots of positive from families and cyclists. Some contentious. **Criteria around what might become more permanent** (reported to June Committee): Impact on walking and cycling rates, use of public transport, and city centre footfall, traffic disturbance (e.g. diversions creating other rat-runs), residences' parking, disabled access and businesses (loading and parking).

**Local Spokes organisers: Asked to speak on the changes implemented in their patch: what impact: good/ what can still be improved.**

Jocelyn Dellar (Duddingston): 2 Primary schools and 2 High schools, a skatepark.... Lots of kids moving around all the time along this busy road. **Segregated cycle lane**: Lots more kids with parents now think a cycle commute is now doable. 'Build it and they will come' works. Now feel safe enough to do this. SfP has reduced the **general speed** of traffic, now there are more peds and cyclists around, making everybody safer. The measures have **reduced conflict** between different road users (we now generally don't need to cycle on the pavement, unfairness and anger towards cars who previously get all the space on the road, now still creating conflict where badly behaved e.g. cycle lane parking). Space is more equally divided up for a wider variety of road users, reducing conflict – and inevitable as we cannot sustain a car-based society. Everybody wins! **Still lots to be done**:

Cars parking in cycle lanes necessitating us to go up onto the pavement or out into the road. Cars parked on pavement blocking peds. Idling with engines on and polluting. Traffic warden needs to move. Need for re-designing junctions where cycle lanes feed in. Need a segregated bike lane on both sides.

Claire Connachan (Corstorphine):

Pavement widening, clutter removal, some closures. Not much changed for cyclists, but ped changes has had huge positive impact especially for kids' safety: general slowing down traffic around junctions especially, and resulted in big increase in walking and cycling. Kids are indicator species: if they can, then everybody can. Therefore need to focus efforts around schools. **Still lots to do**: More of everything! Anything! Especially: really need segregated space on the A8, main road, to protect shopping and to connect neighbourhoods.

Ewen Maclean (Edinburgh South):

**Meadows to Greenbank Quiet Route** has been really beneficial in lots of ways. Really increased kids uptake of commuting walking, by bike and other small wheels. (Many photos showing kids on bikes, parked bikes.) Reduced presence of cars everywhere especially around the schools, resulting in less panic, quieter, safer, much nicer environment generally. Instead of thinking that we are taking away space from drivers (we are not, anyway), **we need to think about how we are taking away safety from kids** if we don't make these changes permanent. Graph of numbers ? **More to do:** We can learn from experience about what we can do next: Cluny Drive, rat runs, need more trials of different diversions to experiment with where is best (least negative effects)

**Spokes Announcements:** Extension to this consultation. Competition launched, great prizes!

## Q&A:

**Big theme questions: What are the strategic choices that guided what has been done?: e.g. why not the Kaimes area?, Colinton and Ballerno yet all also very busy?...**

Lesley: Not starting from blank sheet: addressing immediate hospital community needs and addressing other urgent Covid needs, limitations from road width, joining up with existing other infrastructure, building on and implementing already existing plans in some areas. (i.e. this is not like fairly addressing all parts of the city equally).

People underestimate the amount of time and resource into detailed design. Therefore: guiding criteria had to prioritise where we were expecting most benefit within limited timing and with limited funding.

**Qs around the criteria for the detailed design: choice of bollards, width and maintenance.**

Phil: Started and evolved/progressed (from cones to armadillos), depended much on availability – every council was after the same materials (deliveries were problematic). Needed to standardise. Chose these because solid/strong, reflective, 2m long. Ordered 1000s. Widths between them: max possible, varied in different places (closer together in town centre to prevent parking between them). Cost also an issue. Also interaction with buses (6.5m). Need to maintain snowplough and hospital access. Extra cleaning for snow and leaves this year and other hiccups that were unexpected. Extra staff brought in from other areas of council to help.

Lesley: Some lack of willingness to change (cones and barriers were moved), more permanent materials needed / better for people to accept these changes as permanent. If approved in June, step up even more to more permanent materials and detailed design. Winter was bad: senior officers are already looking into prep for next winter.

**Q: Parking enforcements?**

Lesley: Always remain an issue: some drivers think they have a right to park anywhere. Will be less opportunity for bad behaviour when more permanent structures are introduced. Council is talking to enforcers and we are talking to these frequent offenders, explaining the effect they have of their bad behaviour. Social media also helps identify offenders and shaming them into stopping.

Phil: Spacing of defenders: closer together is deterrent but also has cost implications – it's a trade-off.

Ewen: Take a longer-term view: Now the schools are also engaging people, there is less bad behaviour than there used to be. Intervention that normalises good behaviour, collectively shaming and making aware of effects: of how it compromises kids' safety. There has been a slow moral shift already.

Claire: Parking and enforcement in Corstorphine has been a long-standing issue. Really cheeky behaviour at Corstorphine Primary that has been hard to tackle.

**Q: Parking in front of shops 'killing trade'?**

Lesley: **Widening pavements** to contain infection risks (waiting outside on pavement for entry) – **has been necessary** to keep shops open, for public health.

Shops think that people come by car, but **this is not true**. Cyclists and peds spend more – research has established this well, but is a hard message to swallow: people see changes and attribute their hardship to those. Fear change because already struggling. We need to see this in the round for what it is.

**Q: Assessment criteria for making SfP measures more permanent?**

Phil: We will report back to the June committee on: Impact on businesses: Space on the street, impact on loading, impact on other parking. These criteria are on the website – transparency. Though it is hard to separate out these criteria, we are working out how we will do this as we won't have much survey data.

**Q: Impact on disabled people? (e.g. changes for Blue Badge holders)**

Yes, there will be changes, but they can also park on yellow lines etc. Extras will remain in place.

Depends on what you're looking at: needs of mobility scooters, visual impairment (alongside parking of Blue Badge)? impact on crossing road also; and also tricky how impact is measured. Shorter crossing distances is one big criterion. Widening pavements does exactly that. We have to weigh up needs of every type of disabled and able-bodied people.

Lesley: Despite pressure to do this quickly we have consulted with all different groups' representatives and will continue to do so, and have indicated clearly how we prioritise them (and will keep on doing so, as we are obliged to do by law). Many people comment that we don't but this is not true: it will always be a decision about how to accommodate all the different kinds of needs at every single individually unique scenario. This is very challenging and we will get it more right in some places than in others.

Phil: Mobility and visual impairment has been at the core of all designs (e.g. that's why we have cycle lanes stopping before junctions etc.).

**Q: Safety and Fatalities: Killed and Seriously Injured (KSIs) occur mainly around junctions. (When) Are you tackling those?**

Lesley: SfP has not tried to tackle those, though we recognise the need for this: we know they are key in safety for cycling. There has not been money and time in this scheme, and junctions are tricky. Senior officers are looking into several dangerous junctions and ways to address these in standardised ways, e.g. diverting large traffic to other roads. It will take time but is on its way. King's Road: temporary short terms action being implemented.

Phil: 20 mph has had general beneficial impact (30% incidents down since introduction. Generally more civilised environment for cycling and walking. Junctions are really expensive to redesign and care needs to be taken to not affect the bus network negatively. They need to get through junctions without delay.

**Q: How do we use Social Media to build positive messages? (Inviting one line from each speaker to conclude)**

Jocelyn: Kids are the litmus test – use them in your messages.

Lesley: There are those who don't want change and often do not (want to?) understand others' needs and the processes that need to be followed. There are others who realise that we need to increase sustainable ways of being. Social media seems to polarise and entrench these groups and therefore has not been useful for the city. We need to build on greater understanding between different views and do this with wide thorough consultation processes. It's hard to see how social media can help with this.

Claire: We can't change people's mind through social media, but instead, need to work only with positive messaging only. Block the haters and keep making constructive messages and reinforcing positives.

Ewen: There is a fundamental need to make improvements in health, activity, pollution, environment, emissions. It is tricky through social media but we need to keep explaining and presenting the longer-term picture, and bring solutions towards that. Anyone who blocks, needs to be asked for alternative concrete doable suggestions. If they cannot be constructive, we cannot work with them.

**Roundup by Caroline Brown (Chair):**

Impressive progress has been made through SfP in Edinburgh (just compare with London!). We take our hats off to the Council for embracing this and for their achievements to date. Lots of learning has also been taking place. Now a period of reflection is coming and we wish them well with this.

Meantime, this week Scot Government has backed the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and become the first devolved nation in the world to incorporate it into its domestic law. This signals a culture shift with great potential to transform children's lives in Scotland, as it enshrines their right to be heard, to be safe and protected, to participate etc. with reporting obligations and funding to implement. We have heard how they should be regarded as an indicative species when it comes to cycling: a good city is a city where children can ride their bikes safely. Lets bring it on!