

Hello Street Schemes,

We have prepared a response for the “Retaining ‘Spaces for People’ measures” as a group of local residents.

In principle, we are strongly in favour of retaining schemes that help reduce the car dominance of the city. We have aligned with community active travel groups across Edinburgh in signing a letter of support for the Spaces for People scheme which was distributed to parents and school staff to encourage responses to the consultation.

While other roads were opened for people around greenspaces as part of the Spaces for People scheme, most notably Silverknowes and Leith Links, Holyrood Park was not included despite clear public desire for improvements revealed in the Council’s consultation last spring:

1. Of 4,000 comments made by Edinburgh residents, **all top 5 most-agreed comments** across the platform were about Holyrood Park, and 9 out of the top 10 most-agreed comments were about Holyrood Park. The Park received 99 comments and nearly 2,000 agreements, **showing vastly greater public engagement than the areas where CEC implemented Spaces for People measures**. This reflects both huge public interest in Holyrood Park and a great need for improvements for walking, wheeling and cycling.
2. The most frequently reported problems in Holyrood Park are the speed and volume of traffic.
3. **Closing the park roads to vehicles is the most popular proposed solution** to these issues, with 3 in every 4 contributions either suggesting or agreeing with this idea.

Given these results, we believe the Council could and should have worked with Historic Environment Scotland to close their park roads to private motor traffic full time, if necessary utilising Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders on Council-operated roads leading to the park.

Instead, documents released to the Transport and Environment Committee on scheme prioritisation seemed to indicate that closing the Holyrood Park roads to motor vehicle traffic was dismissed due to interaction with the South Bridge scheme, which would seem to indicate the South Bridge scheme plans to use the private park roads to absorb anticipated traffic displacement, contradictory to the consultation results.

Closing Holyrood Park’s roads to motorised through-traffic not only complements, but is crucial, to realising the Council’s aim of improving walking, wheeling and cycling across the city through Spaces for People. Furthermore, a closure would make Holyrood Park a genuine Quiet Area (as designated in the City Mobility Plan) with minimal noise and air pollution.

As an iconic and large urban greenspace, Holyrood Park has continued to attract residents from across the city throughout the pandemic, especially during the very limited weekend road closures. The closure of Holyrood Park to motorised traffic full-time should be a flagship scheme for the Council, in partnership with HES, showing how people of all ages and abilities can enjoy a car-free park without worrying about traffic ([see our website to illustrate the vision of a car-free park](#)).

We ask that the Council work with Historic Environment Scotland to finally close the park roads to motorised through-traffic, utilising TTROs if necessary. Given the likely long term changes in travel trends due to the rise of homeworking, it would be advantageous for the

Council and HES to act now to embed the change before the end of lockdown. The Council should use all its available powers to make this happen on behalf of residents who clearly showed an overwhelming preference for the roads to be closed to vehicles in last spring's consultation.

With thanks in advance,

Car-Free Holyrood

<https://carfreeholyrood.wordpress.com/>

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