



5th April 2021

## Low Traffic Corstorphine

lowtrafficcorstorphine.org.uk | @TrafficLow

LTC < page 1 of 5 >

### Spaces for People Consultation Response

Whether you walk, cycle, wheel or drive in our neighbourhood, Low Traffic Corstorphine (LTC) is a community group that aims to provide a focus for residents, school children and carers, business owners, people who work in the area and regular visitors who want safer, healthier, less congested streets. To this end, we would like to respond to the Council's Spaces for People (SfP) consultation.

#### Summary

Corstorphine has a long history of traffic, parking, congestion and air quality issues. The City Mobility Plan highlights our community for these very reasons and plans to address these problems through a range of policy measures.

As a way to tackle these long-standing issues, we strongly support interventions in our local area to improve provision for people walking, wheeling and cycling, and as a natural extension of this are in principle supportive of SfP interventions being made permanent.

Our support comes from lived-in experience of interventions locally, and we cannot comment on other SfP schemes across other parts of Edinburgh. We are supportive in principle of these interventions based on SfP funding's aims and objectives and how they dovetail into wider CEC transport, air quality, climate change and environment policies, but appreciate that of over 100 schemes delivered some of them will have been less successful than others and not all will merit permanence.

From quality surveys, reports and consultations, we know that **over half of residents in Edinburgh don't use a car** as their main form of transport, that around **a third of people walk** as their main form of transport, that **around 8-12% of people commute regularly by cycle**, that **a quarter of people in the city cycle once a week** and that around **half of the city's population wants to cycle more**.

There is plenty of evidence to demonstrate significant demand for more active travel journeys and better active travel infrastructure, of which SfP plays a part alongside other CEC projects. While Covid-19 has changed travel behaviours over the last year, it's clear that we need to "build back better" in order to address transport inequalities, the climate crisis, air pollution and the physical inactivity epidemic. SfP measures made permanent can address all of these and more.

### SfP schemes in Corstorphine

The Corstorphine area has seen a range of measures on the ground over the last year, of which we would like to comment on. Overall, we have been pleased with the interventions, but there are elements that we hope would be addressed as part of any permanent implementation.

#### Corstorphine Town Centre

- ▶ We feel this has been very successful at giving pedestrians more space and encouraging people to visit businesses on foot and support it becoming permanent.
- ▶ Pavement widening should be accessible. We would expect dropped kerbs, smooth and unbroken pavement, tactile paving and proper kerbing to aid people with visual impairments and mobility problems.



## Low Traffic Corstorphine

lowtrafficcorstorphine.org.uk | @TrafficLow

- ▶ We are pleased with the pavement decluttering and would encourage CEC to continue with this programme to help make streets accessible.
- ▶ Fixed timings for pedestrian crossings have been necessary re Covid-19, but waiting times are still woefully long. There should be more priority for people to cross the road and more time given to the green man (key crossings currently have 5-6 seconds green man - nowhere near long enough for anyone with mobility needs).
- ▶ We would like to see wider pavements alongside protected cycling provision as part of a wider A8 cycle route. We are surprised that A8 cycling provision has not been included along this key corridor, as many other arterial routes have been provided temporary protected cycleways. Its inclusion would be a significant improvement for the cycling network.
- ▶ While the town centre's main shopping street has enjoyed better pedestrian provision, the same cannot be said of key pedestrian routes leading onto St John's Road. We hope that Clermiston Road, Kirk Loan, Manse Road, Featherhall Avenue, Corstorphine Bank Drive and other streets are given the opportunity to be more pedestrian-friendly. We hope that the low traffic neighbourhood and parking consultations help to highlight the issues along these streets and problems such as irresponsible parking, narrow pavements and volume/speed of traffic.

### Cammo Walk

- ▶ This has been very popular and we would like to see this road's designation as an active travel and exercise corridor maintained.
- ▶ The temporary crossing across Maybury Road has been welcomed to aid pedestrians over a very busy and unpleasant dual carriageway. We would like this upgraded to a permanent toucan crossing, as Cammo Walk and surrounds are also very popular for people on cycles.
- ▶ Pavements are narrow and broken at the new Maybury Road crossing point. We would like to see this addressed, as well as the junction to get onto Cammo Walk proper, as it is currently difficult for people wheeling. We note a desire line has been tracked through the grass verge at the crossing point; this could make an accessible access route provided the incline is not too steep.

### Drum Brae North

- ▶ This relatively new intervention has been a good quality piece of temporary infrastructure for people cycling. We support its permanent retention but feel that it should be more joined up. Drum Brae North and South are scary and unpleasant roads to cycle on without protected cycleways the whole length. We would like to see families able to cycle the full stretch of this road; the intervention in its current guise does not accommodate this.

### Meadow Place Road/Ladywell Road

- ▶ We are supportive of a permanent protected cycleway along Meadow Place Road, as it is a key north/south route and would be a significant improvement for the local cycling network.
- ▶ Ideally, we would like to see this protected provision meet with the protected provision on Drum Brae North (see our notes above), giving separation of cycles this full north/south stretch.
- ▶ Ladywell Road eastbound is quite poor for cycling in its current format and it would be improved with more consistent protection. We note also that any protection for cycling is lost at the junction to Featherhall Ave, and for this to really be a great permanent addition to the area it would be good to continue protected cycleway along Corstorphine High Street.



## Low Traffic Corstorphine

lowtrafficcorstorphine.org.uk | @TrafficLow

- ▶ We note there has been some recent local misrepresentation with respect to LTC's previous response to this SfP intervention. To be clear, we would not advocate for the removal of disabled car parking in order to accommodate a cycleway eastbound on Ladywell Road. The [Edinburgh Street Design Guidance](#) offers various options to support both disabled parking **and** protected cycling provision, and we would hope to see this implemented as a way to balance the needs of different transport users should this scheme become permanent.

### Corstorphine High Street

- ▶ This includes junction radii tightening, pavement widening and build outs along the High Street. We feel these have all been positive additions to a street that has many amenities (including a local primary school) and is plagued by irresponsible parking and speeding drivers. We support permanent implementation of these SfP measures.
- ▶ Junction tightening has much improved crossing the road for families, and wider pavements have been welcome for families travelling to school on foot and wheel. The temporary build outs have helped to slow traffic on the High Street and we would be keen to see further measures along this street such as traffic lights to make it safer for the many people on foot, wheel and cycle.
- ▶ The temporary wands and lane defenders to help deter irresponsible pavement parking around the school are welcomed, but we note the possible conflict they pose for people with visual impairments. Pavement parking is more hazardous for a person with visual impairments than temporary wands are, but a permanent implementation should ensure that people with visual impairments are not at disadvantage.

### School Streets

- ▶ Feedback from parents and carers walking and wheeling with children to school has been very positive on these temporary measures and we would support school streets around Corstorphine, Gyle Muir and Carrick Knowe primary schools being made permanent.

### Craigmount High School

- ▶ This intervention has not yet been implemented so we are unable to comment.

## Ensuring permanent interventions are accessible and equitable

We caveat our support and feedback on these local SfP schemes around them being accessible and equitable for people walking, wheeling and cycling. We would expect any permanent implementation to do the following:

- ▶ Ensure that permanent pavement improvements include smooth and unbroken surfaces, widths that meet the minimum Street Design Guidance, dropped kerbs in appropriate locations, proper kerbing for people with visual impairments, relevant tactile paving, protection from pavement parking (where applicable) and continuous footway over junctions to ensure that people wheeling and using mobility aids can get about as a pedestrian without impediment.
- ▶ Provide accessible protected cycling routes for any adapted cycle, so that people who cycle for mobility can access infrastructure safely. This includes tandems for visually impaired cyclists, handcycles, recumbent cycles, tricycles and any other adapted cycle. This also means that cargo bikes, trailers and tag-alongs used by families cycling will be able to access these routes.



## Low Traffic Corstorphine

lowtrafficcorstorphine.org.uk | @TrafficLow

LTC < page 4 of 5 >

- ▶ Avoid the implementation of any schemes that place pedestrians and cyclists in conflict. We await with interest the outcome of CEC's investigation into bus stop bypasses, as they are often executed poorly for people with visual impairments.
- ▶ Undertake the relevant equalities impact assessments and monitoring to ensure improvements meet the prescribed criteria. We would also expect you to liaise with relevant organisations such as the Edinburgh Access Panel, the emergency services, Living Streets Edinburgh and Spokes as well as the local community on permanent changes.
- ▶ Ensure that contractors delivering permanent infrastructure comply with accessibility requirements. Contractors often make spaces completely inaccessible for people getting about actively, and we would like to see more consideration given.
- ▶ Retain or enhance existing disabled parking for people who rely on a car as a mobility aid. We are supportive of the reallocation of general parking provision to disabled bays where relevant, to ensure that disabled drivers have appropriate access to local amenities.

### Considering Local Opposition

Despite some local noisy voices, it's pretty clear from multiple [quality surveys](#), consultations and [reports](#) that the majority of people in Edinburgh support walking, wheeling and cycling investment. The recent formation of [Better Edinburgh for Sustainable Transport \(BEST\)](#), which includes LTC as a member, helps to strengthen and confirm the groundswell of support for progressive infrastructure improvements in our city.

We do feel concerned that negative voices are drowning out people that want to support safer streets for active travel, and note that there is a significant amount of misinformation being bandied about locally in an attempt to stoke opposition. We have received many messages of support from people around Corstorphine who are keen to see safer streets and support SfP but are too frightened to express that opinion publicly for fear of bullying and pile-ons.

The current toxic and polarised nature of local social media has led many people to misunderstand or lack context with respect to how CEC aims to shift the transport balance towards the sustainable transport hierarchy and away from short trips in private vehicles. We appreciate that change is very difficult and empathise with people who are worried that the provision of better walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure will impede them in some way as drivers. With these worries in hand, we feel it is important for CEC to share and communicate the significant body of evidence that does not bear out these concerns.

We note the sudden "interest" from certain groups and individuals regarding disabled people's long-standing transport struggles as soon as SfP is mentioned. Disabled people's opinions and needs are just as varied as anyone else's when it comes to making our streets safer and more equitable, and we do not stand with appropriating those struggles to aid a particular viewpoint, whether for or against.

As noted earlier in our response, we hope that CEC will constructively engage with disabled people and listen to their views. What we do know is that the status quo is [not working for people with disabilities](#), and our urban environments need to change to enable disabled people to get about safely. Alongside national disability organisations, we are supporters of the Walk, Wheel, Cycle, Vote



## Low Traffic Corstorphine

lowtrafficcorstorphine.org.uk | @TrafficLow

**key asks** for increased investment in active travel, more accessible streets, and infrastructure that is truly inclusive. We sincerely hope that any permanent measures will address these points.

### Conclusion

We hope that this feedback will be useful to council officers as they start to piece together the walking, wheeling and cycling stories from residents and visitors to the area who have experienced SFP schemes. We feel positive about the consultation process and ongoing dialogue with the City of Edinburgh Council. No doubt there is a lot of work to do, but once the balance starts to shift towards more equitable and socially just forms of transport, it will make all the difference.

Thank you for addressing the long-standing issues we have faced in the area with traffic, road safety and pollution. We cannot wait to experience Corstorphine with more priority and space given to walking, wheeling and cycling, should these schemes become permanent.

Yours sincerely  
(on behalf of Low Traffic Corstorphine)

*Janis Ross-Williamson*

Janis Ross-Williamson

Chris Young