

How would you describe the impact of 'Spaces for People' projects on your business? - impact on business

Negative

How much do you support or oppose retaining the following types of measure as a means of achieving longer term Council objectives?

Projects to support walking and cycling to school, such as: more space for walking and cycling, restricting parking, closing streets near schools (full time or just at school arrival and departure times - 'school streets') Support

How much do you support or oppose retaining the following types of measure as a means of achieving longer term Council objectives?

New protected cycle lanes on main roads

Oppose

Additional space for walking and/or cycling in shopping streets

Neutral

Additional space for walking and/or cycling in the city centre

Neutral

Connecting existing walking/cycling routes used for leisure, by closing some roads to cars and/or providing protected space for walking and cycling on roads.

Oppose

New signed 'quiet connections' for day to day cycling, with road closures to reduce traffic

Oppose

What would you say are the most important disadvantages of retaining 'Spaces for People' measures in place?

Our daily experience of operating the bus network around the Spaces for People schemes allows us to monitor the impact of the schemes on our business and our passengers. Along with regular observations we have engaged with our driver workforce to understand how the schemes work in practice.

Reduced traffic congestion cannot be attributed to Spaces for People Schemes, for the past year, working patterns, education, leisure and indeed day to day life has been significantly altered, therefore any reduction in congestion is significantly more likely to be a result of these changes in people's daily routine. In some areas of the bus network we have seen increased congestion as a result of the schemes diverting traffic on to bus routes (Comiston Road). It is also very difficult to predict what and when any increase or reduction in traffic will take place once daily life returns to a more settled state.

All bus passengers walk or wheel before and after each journey therefore access to bus stops is a priority for Lothian Buses. Some schemes, notably in the city centre have reduced access to bus stops by means of bus stop removal (The Mound and George IV Bridge), widened pavement with increased angle of boarding making wheelchair access extremely difficult (Princes Street at Waverley

Steps) or the universally disliked floating bus stops/bus stop bypasses (George IV Bridge). If any of these schemes have potential to be retained these aspects must be reviewed to ensure that walkers and wheelers are prioritised when making the shift to public transport.

Bus operations have been impacted operationally by some schemes beyond congestion and bus stop access. The closure of Waverley Bridge involved relocating bus services to other city centre locations with less visibility, poorer passenger facilities and additional staffing costs. These services cater for air passengers/workers or tourists and whilst these are virtually non-existent at present both markets have a role to play in Edinburgh's economic recovery. Some bus stops on the bus network are used to allow drivers to start and finish their shift on take a meal break and a reduction in bus stop areas or reduced kerb space limits the ability to use stops for these purposes the most recent example being Longstone Road where only one bus can now serve the bus stop at any given time.

At present (early April) government messaging has only just changed from stay at home to stay local. As such we are firmly of the belief that deciding now which schemes stay and which are removed is premature. General traffic patterns are not at similar levels to pre-pandemic nor are likely to be for some time, additionally bus patronage is dramatically reduced and as such bus journey times have in the main reduced (less boarding and alighting time) and bus stops are not being used as well as in the past, therefore a complete picture of what works and what does not is impossible to see. Whilst we understand the time limitations on TTRO's and the desire to avoid removing a scheme only to put it back in the future we believe further monitoring and operational experience should be gained before deciding which schemes to make permanent.

Please select any streets, roads or schools with Spaces for People measures in place that you would particularly like to be removed following the pandemic

Most or All
Waverley Bridge
George IV Bridge
Corstorphine
Morningside
Comiston Road