

Creating safer spaces for walking and cycling - FAQs

Why is the Council introducing the new temporary emergency measures?

In response to Covid-19, the Council is introducing temporary emergency measures to make streets safe for walking and cycling while observing physical distancing guidance.

We are ensuring that our City is supporting essential journeys and helping local people to use open spaces, with the safest, most accessible routes we can offer.

As we plan for the city's recovery, it will also be vital to support businesses re-open and adapt to the new physical distancing requirements.

There has been significant, understandable public demand for action to help facilitate safe daily exercise and the movement of essential workers.

What actions are planned?

Initial actions will tackle areas highlighted as pinch points for pedestrians and cyclists and will include some further road closures, lane closures to expand pedestrian space and the implementation of temporary protected cycle lanes.

To help keep our buses moving in the reduced street space that will result from other measures, we will need to make some significant changes to how traffic moves around the city, especially in the centre. These will include implementing several 'bus gates'. Some other vehicles are likely to be allowed through these 'gates', details will be carefully considered as the measures are designed.

In the slightly longer term as lockdown measures continue and are eventually eased, we will implement further changes across the city, including more cycle lanes and further measures to help pedestrians. It is also hoped that progress on more permanent schemes under the Council's Active Travel Investment Programme can be brought forward, but this will depend on funding and some changes to legislation.

How will the measures be funded?

The Scottish Government has confirmed a £30m 'Spaces for People' fund to help local authorities introduce such emergency measures. It will provide 100% funding for what are expected to be relatively low cost, emergency measures. The Council will apply for funding to pay for all measures implemented.

How were the locations and types of measures selected?

Locations and measures have been identified in line with the following aims:

- Make space for people to exercise safely
- Make space for people to travel safely around the city
- Reduce risk to people who use the road for travel or exercise

- Make space for people in local town centres and the city centre

In selecting measures for implementation, the following factors have been and will be considered:

- Supporting reducing the spread of Covid-19
- Benefit to pedestrians
- Benefit to people using cycles, wheelchairs and prams
- Impact on public transport
- Impact on emergency services routes
- Impact on people with mobility difficulties or visual impairments
- Impact of diverting traffic
- Impact on parking
- Impact on business servicing
- Cost
- Ease of operation

All proposals are subject to a detailed design and risk assessment process and can be refined in response to feedback as appropriate.

What is the legal framework for implementing emergency measures?

To manage how our roads are used, the Council is required to use Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs). The process involved in introducing TROs can be lengthy, involving requirements to consult and for the Council to consider objections in detail. The need for urgent changes to our network means that we need to find a quicker path towards effective action.

Section 14 (1) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act (RTRA) 1984 allows the Roads Authority (the Council) to promote Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTROs) in certain circumstances that can be in place for up to 18 months for a road or carriageway or six months for a footpath or cycleway. Recent advice from the Scottish Government has identified Covid-19 as “a danger to the public”, one of the circumstances when we can promote a TTRO, allowing us to use this route to quickly introduce measures on-street.

A TTRO involves a simpler legal process and, unlike a TRO, cannot be objected to.

How long will the new measures be in place?

The temporary measures will be in place for up to 18 months and will be subject to ongoing review.

How is the Council communicating and engaging with people on the new measures?

It is vital that we move quickly to implement these works as the health and well being of residents and businesses is our priority. Given the urgent nature of these works, normal expectations about community engagement cannot be fulfilled.

Ward councillors, community councils, access groups, emergency services and active travel organisations Spokes and Living Streets are notified of the new measures as part of the Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) process.

We are inviting people to add their comments and suggestions for temporary measures and locations using the [Commonplace](#) digital mapping tool. The Commonplace site will be open until 29 June 2020 and information collected will support the Council to prioritise further schemes being brought forward.

Other communication channels include media promotion, outdoor advertising and lamp post banners. General updates are added to Council Twitter and Facebook with links to a dedicated page on the Council [website](#).

We will work with partners to try to reach as many people and target audiences as possible and we will seek to ensure that key messages are appropriately tailored.

Will the emergency services be able to gain access?

We are coordinating this work with emergency services and ensuring local access for residents and businesses will be maintained at all times. Any temporary measures that are introduced will be reviewed regularly to ensure that the design continues to meet the above objectives.

Have the needs of disabled people been taken into consideration?

The public sector equality duty still applies in making changes to the road network. All measures that are introduced will consider the needs of people with disabilities. This is a key part of our design assessment. We will be notifying the Edinburgh Access Panel and RNIB in advance of the proposals for new measures.

How will the measures be monitored?

The transport and locality teams will continue to monitor all of the schemes that are deployed and will make any adjustments that are felt to be necessary to mitigate any impacts. A monitoring plan will be developed and implemented in partnership with Sustrans.

How will the needs of businesses be taken into account?

We are taking the practical needs of businesses into account, and we will be notifying all those affected as we progress plans. It's essential that we bring everyone with us we move towards a 'new normal', benefiting the health, wellbeing and prosperity of the city.

While proposed temporary measures will primarily address immediate concerns around physical distancing, they also aim to support the city's economic and social recovery, and that of the many businesses who have felt the impact of this crisis. Research shows that improved access to businesses for pedestrians and cyclists has a positive impact on spending.

This situation has changed the way we move around the city, and we want to sustain this shift towards cycling and walking as restrictions are eased. By establishing more space around shops, cafés and restaurants on streets like Cockburn Street and Victoria Street in

the city centre, we want to create places for people to relax, interact and enjoy what's on offer.

The proposed measures will also support physical distancing and queuing when businesses re-open.

What is the Council doing to encourage safe and considerate cycling and walking in response to increased levels?

As part of our communication programme, we will be installing temporary signs and lamp post wraps at key locations along the off-route network to remind people to slow down, respect others and follow government guidance for social distancing. The temporary signage and lamp post wraps is supported by our [Paths for Everyone campaign](#) which asks everyone to follow our [Paths for Everyone code of conduct](#)

A social media campaign is underway with articles in the Press highlighting the benefits of active travel and encouraging people to think about travelling at quieter times and use some of the less busy routes. Data from the Council's walking and cycling counters will also help to identify levels of usage and peak times.