



Cycle Lewes & Lewes Living Streets, updated, 12th May 2020

Working Notes to inform campaign for Reallocation of Road/Street Space during the time of Covid-19

We think that if we get better, safer and more pleasant space, then it could encourage residents to move around again and visitors to come back into our town.

We intend to work on a proposal/plan that:

- * is sympathetic to traders, and recognises the need to get Lewes working again and our small local businesses trading successfully,
- * recognises that visitors and residents may not want to walk or come into Lewes as our pavements and roads are narrow and that even before Covid-19 you sometimes had to walk in the road to avoid other people with little space in some areas for cyclists,
- * enables us to work with our businesses and their representative 'bodies' and our local Councillors in order to engage them in looking at/agreeing to redesigning some of the Town's space (we know our District Council is already doing this)
- * looks at what others are doing and how they have done this and incorporate what is relevant/possible for Lewes

Some of our first thoughts are:

- * The removal of street parking along the High Street and School Hill and Friars Walk and Landsdowne Place,
- * To reallocate that space to pedestrians and contra-flow for cyclists; dependent on configurations,

- * To allow residents to park in off street parking lots (e.g. Old Magistrates Court, Phoenix Causeway, East Street, etc),
- * To restrict loading and unloading to certain hours in these areas,
- * To ban all traffic from Cliffe High Street except during limited loading periods,



- * To reduce the amount of 'through traffic' coming in/out of Lewes (it's is often quicker to drive through Lewes and out again than using the A27 by-pass) through signage, narrower carriageways & the change of traffic light phasing,
- * To create School Streets - restrict motor traffic around schools to pick up and drop off times during term time.
- * To make Little East Street two ways for cyclists (either the full length or to Albion Street and then School Hill from Albion Street down to Eastgate Street two way).
- * To create a contra flow from the traffic lights at the bottom of School Hill to the Waitrose turning in one of the two lanes.
- * **To ensure rigorous enforcement of the 20mph and other speed limits in the town** including using any cameras operating in the town even if they are usually used for other purposes (e.g ASB prevention).

References

<https://www.transportxtra.com/publications/local-transport-today/news/65395/emergency-traffic-measures-will-help-social-distancing-in-hounslow>

<https://www.ciht.org.uk/blogs/local-active-transport-helping-address-impact-of-coronavirus>
(written by Mark Strong, Transport Initiatives)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reallocating-road-space-in-response-to-covid-19-statutory-guidance-for-local-authorities/traffic-management-act-2004-network-management-in-response-to-covid-19>

Extract from Mark Strong, 16 April 2020 Blog

There are three key reasons why action is needed locally:

* To reduce the risk of casualties from road traffic crashes (both between motor vehicles and between vehicles and people walking or cycling), and hence the burden on our seriously over-stretched health services.

* To maintain and improve better local air quality to make it easier for people with breathing problems.

* To ensure that people walking and cycling can do so safely while keeping at least 2m apart.

Examples:

Hackney, London, local people have been asked for ideas to where local streets can be “filtered” (closures for motor traffic only, to make walking and cycling safer).

Barnes, London, local traders have informally coned off waiting areas outside their shops to allow pedestrians to safely pass those queuing.

London, there has been a widespread effort to increase the use of e-cargo bikes to deliver food and other essential supplies.

Strategic cycling network using temporary materials, building new routes

Traffic lights are being altered to reduce the time Londoners must wait to cross

Some roads may be restricted to bus lanes and bikes only at certain times of the day.

More space will be given to pedestrians to reduce crowding at busy transport interchanges

Hammersmith - Pavements in King Street and Uxbridge Road are to be [temporarily widened](#) to help with social distancing, by reducing two-lane roads to single lanes



Hackney [has decided](#) to widen pavement at seven sites near supermarkets and to close a market to through traffic

Lambeth [released £78,500](#) to enable immediate changes to the highway to allow physical distancing to take place at high priority location.

Summary: 9th May Reallocating road space: measures/guidance from Department of Transport (DfT)

Local authorities in areas with high levels of public transport use should take measures to reallocate road space to people walking and cycling, both to encourage active travel and to enable social distancing during restart ([social distancing in this context primarily refers to the need for people to stay 2 metres apart where possible when outdoors](#)). Local authorities where public transport use is low should be considering all possible measures. Measures should be taken as swiftly as possible, and in any event within weeks, given the urgent need to change travel habits before the restart takes full effect.

None of these measures are new - they are interventions that are a standard part of the traffic management toolkit, but a step-change in their roll-out is needed to ensure a green restart. They include:

Installing “pop-up” cycle facilities with a minimum level of physical separation from volume traffic; for example, mandatory cycle lanes, using light segregation features such as flexible plastic wands; or quickly converting traffic lanes into temporary cycle lanes (suspending parking bays where necessary); widening existing cycle lanes to enable cyclists to maintain distancing. Facilities should be segregated as far as possible, i.e. with physical measures separating cyclists and other traffic. Lanes indicated by road markings only are very unlikely to be sufficient to deliver the level of change needed, especially in the longer term.

Using cones and barriers: to widen footways along lengths of road, particularly outside shops and transport hubs; to provide more space at bus stops to allow people to queue and socially distance; to widen pedestrian refuges and crossings (both formal and informal) to enable people to cross roads safely and at a distance.

Encouraging walking and cycling to school, for example through the introduction of more “school streets”. Pioneered in London, these are areas around schools where motor traffic is restricted at pick-up and drop-off times, during term-time. They can be effective in encouraging more walking and cycling, particularly where good facilities exist on routes to the school and where the parents, children and school are involved as part of the scheme development.

Reducing speed limits: 20mph speed limits are being more widely adopted as an appropriate speed limit for residential roads, and many through streets in built-up areas. 20mph limits alone will not be sufficient to meet the needs of active travel, but in association with other measures, reducing the speed limit can provide a more attractive and safer environment for walking and cycling.

Introducing pedestrian and cycle zones: restricting access for motor vehicles at certain times (or at all times) to specific streets, or networks of streets, particularly town centres and high streets. This will enable active travel but also social distancing in places where people are likely to gather.

Modal filters (also known as filtered permeability); closing roads to motor traffic, for example by using planters or large barriers. Often used in residential areas, this can create neighbourhoods that are low-traffic or traffic free, creating a more pleasant environment

that encourages people to walk and cycle, and improving safety.

Providing additional cycle parking facilities at key locations, such as outside stations and in high streets, to accommodate an increase in cycling, for example by repurposing parking bays to accommodate cycle racks.

Changes to junction design to accommodate more cyclists - for example, extending Advanced Stop Lines at traffic lights to the maximum permitted depth of 7.5 metres where possible.

“Whole-route” approaches to create corridors for buses, cycles and access only on key routes into town and city centres.

Identifying and bringing forward permanent schemes already planned, for example under Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans, and that can be constructed relatively quickly.

Other considerations

All these measures can be introduced temporarily, either in isolation or as a combined package of measures. **Some interventions, including new lightly-segregated cycle lanes, will not require Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs).** Others will require TROs, of which there are different types. The main ones are:

Permanent: this process includes prior consultation on the proposed scheme design, a 21-day notice period for statutory consultees and others who can log objections; there can be a public inquiry in some circumstances.

Experimental: these are used to trial schemes that may then be made permanent. Authorities may put in place monitoring arrangements, and carry out ongoing consultation once the measure is built. Although the initial implementation period can be quick, the need for extra monitoring and consultation afterwards makes them a more onerous process overall.

Temporary: these can be in place for up to 18 months. There is a 7-day notice period prior to making the TRO and a 14-day notification requirement after it is made, plus publicity requirements. These are most suitable for putting in place temporary measures and road closures.

The department’s [temporary guidance on making TROs](#) should be consulted for help in making orders during the COVID-19 crisis.

Traffic signs may be needed to inform pedestrians, cyclists and drivers of changes to road layouts, particularly where temporary widening is in place. Advice on [using existing signing, and some new temporary designs](#), will be published alongside this guidance. These are covered by the provisions of the [Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016](#) and as such do not need special signs authorisation from the department.

Authorities should monitor and evaluate any temporary measures they install, with a view to making them permanent, and embedding a long-term shift to active travel as we move from restart to recovery.

Access will still be required for other activities in the road, particularly street works, maintenance and other highway works, which will need to be balanced with work to reallocate road space to active travel.

Street works and maintenance activity should carry on, as they will be essential to getting the economy going again. Use of the Street Manager digital service will help to plan and co-ordinate works.

Depending on the measures they are installing, authorities will also need to consider access for Blue Badge holders, deliveries and other essential services as appropriate.

Authorities should consult with the local chiefs of police and emergency services to ensure access is maintained where needed, for example to roads that are closed to motor traffic. They should also work with local businesses to ensure changes reflect their needs, particularly around access to premises.

The public sector equality duty still applies, and in making any changes to their road networks, authorities must consider the needs of disabled people and those with other protected characteristics. Accessibility requirements apply to temporary measures as they do to permanent ones.

Other link to guidance:

<https://lcrig.org.uk/news/traffic-regulation-orders-covid19-guidance>

A number of East Sussex County Councillors have taken this to the Leader of ESCC to see what could be done, this follows letters from Residents across East Sussex, many of who signed up to a call from Lewes Living Streets and Cycle Lewes for temporary restrictions to be put in place during post Covid-19 Lockdown.



From Cllr Keith Glazier, Leader of East Sussex County Council - 27

April

Thank you for your email regarding space for walking and cycling during the coronavirus lock-down. I do appreciate this is a worrying time for everyone, and would like to assure you that we are carefully following Government guidance whilst carrying out essential work to keep our roads safe for key workers and the public.

Whilst the measures you suggest the Council implement may seem simple, as the Local Highway Authority, we are bound by the laws, regulations and design standards of England & Wales and I shall outline below some of the challenges they present us with.

To achieve the measures you are seeking would require a traffic regulation order to close the road (or one lane of a road) or to suspend parking bays. This would entail advertising /

public consultation, and any objections would have to be determined formally. I know the Government has issued guidance on different ways of advertising, but it has not removed the requirement to advertise and consult on proposals.

Closing a road is not simply a matter of advertising and then erecting barriers either, we have to consider wider public access for residents, deliveries, refuse collections and emergency vehicles, as well as the fact that all road users have a legal right to use the public highway. We therefore have to consider a range of views and I don't think we would be able to carry out a proper consultation given the circumstances and timescales, and that would risk challenge.

If we were to widen pavements or create cycleways we would also need to provide some form of physical barrier between live traffic lanes and the cycleway / walkway in the absence of formal signing and road markings so that drivers are adequately informed.

Your suggestion of "suspending push buttons at pedestrian crossings" would not be possible as this would be contrary to national design standards and legislation, leaving the authority open to potential legal challenge and claims. I don't believe Government has relaxed any of these requirements in that respect.

I am unable to comment on actions taken by other countries as they are not subject to UK legislation. Reference has been made to Madeira Drive in Brighton as an example we should follow. However, Madeira Drive is not a Public Highway but a "Special Road" that is not governed by the same legislation. Hence the City Council is able to close the road for numerous events each year. We don't have that luxury and are governed by the Highways Act, and if we don't adhere to the law, and the designs standards, and somebody is injured or worse, then the Council would be negligent in its duties.

I appreciate you may be disappointed by my response; however, traffic levels are significantly reduced during this time of lock-down that I would have thought it perfectly safe for walking and cycling. Therefore, I wouldn't be looking to take something like this forward at the present time."

From Karl Taylor to Paul Humphries, Cycle East Sussex, 28 April 2020

As I understand it the legislation surrounding TROs hasn't been loosened. The guidance given still states that the legislative process still needs to be followed and consultations need to be carried out for TROs. There have been some suggested alternatives as to how we carry out that process and make documents available for consultations but the process hasn't been relaxed. Temporary TROs also still need to be advertised and this takes around six weeks. That is the democratic process that ensures openness and fairness, because for every request for a temporary cycleway there will inevitably be an opposing view.

Madeira Drive in Brighton is different as it is not a Public Highway and therefore is not governed by the same legislation. As such the City Council is able to utilise Madeira Drive for a whole range of purposes. [My note - Subsequent to this Old Shoreham Road A270 is to be used as well]

That is the situation as we understand it, but we will check with the Department for Transport in case we have missed more detailed and relaxed guidance.

