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REPORT TO: Members' Library Report

MEETING DATE:

BY: Head of infrastructure

SUBJECT: Spaces for People December 2020 update

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To update members on the Spaces for People programme, work done to date and committed interventions planned January to March 2021.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To note the significant work undertaken and the achievements as 'one council' in the delivery of the wide ranging programme of temporary measures and interventions to support essential travel for key workers and the public in exercise and enable businesses and life to return to our town centres.
- 2.2 To note, the high level of engagement between officers and community representatives in partnership with Connected Community Managers and Community Councils where we jointly agreed levels of interventions.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The 'Spaces for People' fund is a temporary £30 million infrastructure programme provided by the Scottish Government, make it safer for people to walk, cycle or wheel for essential trips and exercise during the phased route map recovery period.
- 3.2 To gather suggestions and opinions from local people an online web portal ran 21-31 May 2020. This was well received with just under 3000 comments made, and together with feedback from local Members and colleagues across the council, the following priorities were set:
- Slower speeds for quicker recovery
 - Space for shopping
 - Space for exercise
 - Provide space at school

- cycle improvements and local bike hire

3.3 Accordingly, a bid was made to Sustrans, Spaces for People programme with an award of £1.4m on 23rd June 2020.

3.4 Appendix A – Spaces for People Summary update provides full details of all work done and commitments remaining to date, with Appendix B providing comments from the online consultation May 2020 and Appendix C providing illustrations of material used to promote the various projects within programme.

3.5 Finally, Appendix D – provides details of a technical assessment carried out to understand the implications of one ways traffic systems in North Berwick following public representation.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Not applicable

5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 A separate integrated impact assessment have be prepared for the Spaces for people programme of interventions and measures taken.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial – A total of £427k has been spent on projects including town centre measures, 20mph speed limits, Cockenzie to Prestonpans cycleway and the Edinburgh Cycle Hire Scheme by the end of November 2020 with £591k committed payment for project development, design, risk and equalities assessments, and a further £366k on eBike Hire scheme tender.

6.2 Personnel - Not applicable

6.3 Other - None.

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None

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DATE	26/1/21

Appendix A - Spaces for People Summary Update December 2020

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This is a live document and will be subject to change. The reader should note that not all of the interventions proposed may not be achievable or may be adapted over time through the recovery and renewals period.

Introduction

The Spaces for People fund from the Scottish Government is intended for temporary measures to support essential travel and exercise and enable life to return to our town centres. We are encouraged to think beyond the 'business as usual' model and consider what a 'green recovery' will look like.

We collected suggestions from local people via an [online portal](#) from 21-31 May 2020, and advertised this via local councillors, local newspaper and social media. Collating the 3000 comments received via the portal, together with feedback from colleagues across the council we set the following priorities:

- **Slower speeds for quicker recovery** – reduce speed limits in our town centres to 20mph and inter-urban routes to 40mph (excepting A-class roads), making it possible to introduce other supporting measures in towns. It will also support cycling between towns to get to school and for those who cannot drive.
- **Space for shopping** - relocate parking to allow space for queueing (and potentially eating and drinking) as well as passing through. In particular:
 - **North Berwick** – close East end of the High Street to motorised vehicles to allow both queueing and movement. Parking to be displaced to Elcho Green
 - **Haddington** – move parking from north side of the High Street further into the carriageway creating space for people closer to the shops
 - **Musselburgh** – implement a temporary cycle lane on the north side of North High Street and the High Street
- **Space for exercise** – via a series of closed streets, traffic calmed spaces and improved off-road routes, create a 3-5km exercise circuit for walking and cycling around each town.
- **Provide space at school** – provide safer return to School localised school interventions maintaining physical distancing and managing indiscriminate private car drop off
- **Additional cycle parking and local bike hire** – in towns and coastal sites

These aims were presented to all three party leaders in a Briefing Paper on 3 June and approved. An application was made to Sustrans to implement the measures, and a grant of £1.4m awarded on 25 June 2020.

This document provides a summary of progress towards these aims and outlines how we might seek to build on these towards a 'green recovery'.

Process

Working groups were set up for three areas of East Lothian – Musselburgh and Tranent, Haddington and Prestonpans, Dunbar and North Berwick, and three different consultants with previous experience of working with East Lothian in each of these locations was directly awarded a support contract. The consultants would be responsible for drawing up proposals, carrying out risk assessments, integrated impact assessments (equalities assessment) and safety audits, monitoring and reporting.

Additionally, advice and support came from across the council in particular from Economic Development, Connected Communities, Roads Operations, Education, Landscape and Countryside, and Amenity Services.

The working groups moved to create spaces for people in town centres as quickly as possible, given our understanding of the emergency. This was implemented via temporary Traffic Regulation Orders which prohibited parking to create space outside shops in time for them emerging from full lockdown which at the time was the end of June 2020. However, this encountered significant opposition from members of the public who felt the removal of car parking would have a negative impact on their business, and they wanted to have more involvement in the process.

At this stage we widened the working groups to include community stakeholders and all future decisions were taken jointly via a collaborative process between officers of ELC and community representatives. Due to the nature of this process, and the desire to obtain consensus, projects have progressed at different speeds across the county.

Communication

Throughout the process we have sought to keep the public involved via press releases, social media and [new pages on our website](#) to explain the Spaces for People programme.

We created a second [online portal](#) to present the proposed plans and obtain on-going feedback from the public. A summary of comments from this is in Appendix A.

Additionally, as well as providing advice and signage to schools on social distancing on the school run (including a 'park & stride' map for Dunbar Primary) we also produced on-street signage around towns, at bus stops and in popular countryside destinations to explain the programme and encourage responsible behaviour. See Appendix B for examples.

Equalities Impact and Risk Assessment

Integrated Impact Assessments and Risk Assessments were carried out for all areas.

We have strived to ensure that we have not abstracted from existing infrastructure so, even where the enhancement may not be available to all users (for example, due to a raised kerb), the original route will still be accessible. We would expect able-bodied people to make full use of the new features to make space for less agile and vulnerable people where necessary.

Road Safety Audits are being undertaken for all physical features, and for more unusual road layouts e.g. floating bus stops proposed in Musselburgh and Tranent.

Monitoring and evaluation

We have undertaken baseline speed surveys and pedestrian monitoring in towns and at school gates. Further monitoring and surveys will be carried out in 2021.

Costs and Funding

Sustrans awarded £1.4m to East Lothian Council in June 2020. At the time of writing (December 2020) £427k has been spent on projects including the town centre measures, 20mph speed limits, Cockenzie to Prestonpans cycleway and the Edinburgh Cycle Hire Scheme. A further £591k is committed in terms of staff time and consultancy support for design, risk and equalities assessments, road safety audits and public engagement, and the eBike Hire scheme which is currently out for tender. It is estimated that a further £366k will be required to implement the committed schemes – costs to be confirmed once designs are finalised and contracts awarded.

In January 2021 Scotland was moved into Tier 4 with new restrictions. These new restrictions may impact on the delivery of some outstanding projects. We will pay close attention to announcements from Government to ensure we continue to comply with all relevant guidance and requirements and will seek to re-commence/re-schedule postponed activities when the situation becomes less restrictive. We will update further as we move forward through the restrictions. After restrictions are lifted, there will be a need to consider whether there is value in keeping some of the measures in place.

Additional Projects

In October 2020, City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) approached us with a proposal to extend a temporary cycleway along the A199 from Portobello into Musselburgh. This had been highlighted as a priority for local people through their consultation process, and this support had also been captured by our online portal. However, given our limited resources at the time our priority and focus was concentrate on measures which benefitted routes to school so this was not progressed. .

As all of our available funding had already been committed at this stage we approached Sustrans for additional funds on the grounds that a cycleway that stops at the county boundary does not make sense to users. We proposed continuing it into Musselburgh as far as the junction with New Street and Sustrans agreed a further £40k to implement this. This project will be led and

implemented by CEC and properties adjacent to the proposed route will be involved.

Whole of East Lothian projects

Speed limits

We began by implementing temporary 20mph limits in most of our larger towns and villages according to [criteria set out on our website](#). We have also created new temporary 30mph and 40mph limits on many routes to schools.

These speed limits will be in place until March 2022 although we will review before this date which will involve additional traffic surveys to compare the speeds limits.

We have already received positive feedback from communities to keep and extend the new lower speed limits. If this is to be taken forward, a report will be taken to Council for approval to start the statutory process required which will include a full consultation process and the making of permanent traffic regulation orders.

Gateways and traffic calming features

Temporary visual and physical features such as gateways, road crossings and traffic calming will encourage compliance with the new 20mph speed limits.

EBike hire

On-street electric bike (eBike) hire is being procured to provide an alternative to public transport for people who do not drive. We have suggested locations for banks of 8-10 eBikes at:

- High Street, Tranent
- Prestonpans Station
- Memorial Square, Prestonpans
- Memorial Park, Cockenzie
- Mark Lane, Haddington
- Longniddry Station

The supply, operate and maintain contract for 3 years (with optional extensions) is currently going through the procurement process. We expect to have bikes in place by the end of March 2021. However, given current restrictions we will need to monitor and may have to review timeline/delivery.

Figure 1: New bike parking at West Barns Village Hall

Cycle parking

Additional cycle parking has been installed at 36 coast and countryside sites, and some public venues.

Road markings

Markings on the carriageway will be used mainly in Musselburgh and Tranent and on routes leading into those towns, to highlight the potential presence of cyclists. Reminders of 20mph speed limits have been marked on roads throughout the county, as well as additional signage.



Advisory cycle lanes and simple cycle road markings will be used where habitual on-street parking has been observed. Mandatory cycle lanes have been used between towns where there is no on-street parking.

Additionally, on the junctions of side roads with main roads, a cycle lane will be clearly marked to highlight the potential presence of cyclists. Some roundabouts will also be visually narrowed (with road markings) to inhibit vehicle speeds.

Re-timed pedestrian crossings to reduce wait times

Across the county pelican and toucan crossing signals have been altered to reduce wait times for pedestrians and reduce potential for crowding.

Projects in Musselburgh

Suspended parking at two High Street locations to provide space for queuing and social distancing

The early suspension of parking bays on Musselburgh High Street were initially opposed by shopkeepers, and our proposals were modified accordingly to create extra space only where absolutely necessary.

Extended the on-street Edinburgh Cycle Hire Scheme to Musselburgh

This one-year trial of on-street bike hire got off to a flying start in September with 44 new scheme users in the first month. Bikes are located at Edinburgh Road and Brunton Hall. Unfortunately, the Brunton Hall site is suffering from vandalism and the police have been informed. We are continuing to monitor.

Opened the 'electric bridge' in Musselburgh for cyclists

While this project had been an aspiration of ELC for some time. Covid-19 brought this to the fore again with considerable public pressure to move this forward during lockdown. ELC has now taken ownership of the bridge and added signage to make it clear it is for the use of cyclists. The adjacent footbridge will now serve pedestrians only.



Figure 2: Installing railings and road markings prior to opening the Electric Bridge

Further work will be needed in the medium term to improve the surface and railings.

Closure of The Loan in Wallyford to through traffic (except cycles and buses), creating additional space for pedestrians on narrow section over railway bridge.

This is proposed but required further development work and promotion to the wider community. Musselburgh and Wallyford representatives appear supportive.

Projects in Tranent

Suspended parking on part of High Street to provide space for queuing and social distancing

The early suspension of parking bays on Tranent High Street was initially opposed by shopkeepers, and our proposals were modified accordingly to create extra space only where absolutely necessary.

We had also proposed to close Winton Place to vehicle traffic, but this has not been taken forward as it was felt by community representatives to be unnecessary.

Projects in Haddington

Measures to create space in the centre of Haddington were rejected by traders, and further proposals for extended cycle lanes were felt to interfere too much with residential parking. In line with feedback from stakeholders we focussed on road markings, signage and gateway features to reinforce the new temporary 20mph speed limits

Modifications to Knox Place/Court Street junction to create more space for pedestrians

The junction has little space on the footways and is a busy route to school. However, in order to create space for pedestrians it will be necessary to ban right-turning vehicles leaving the town. This has been opposed by some local people on the grounds that the detour will increase traffic on residential streets. This measure is no longer being taken forward.

It may be possible to alter the junction on a permanent basis which would allow both right-turns and created the extra space needed, but this would involve moving signal heads and detailed junction modelling to ensure the correct timings. It is felt that this cannot be implemented quickly and taken forward as a temporary measure.

Projects in Prestonpans

Attempts to suspend parking at pinch-points on Prestonpans High Street were opposed by local traders who felt it would negatively impact on their business, and the proposals were not pursued.

New segregated cycle path between Cockenzie and Prestonpans

This has now been implemented and is widely welcomed.



Figure 3: Cyclist on the newly surfaced cycle path

New crossing of Preston Road to avoid narrow pavement

After exploring many options to create an attractive walking and cycling route along West Loan and to the station, we have agreed on a single crossing point and measures to slow traffic.

The crossing point on Preston Road will guide pedestrians heading from the town onto the wider footway on Station Road.

Traffic calming on Station Road, Preston Road

Speed calming and 20mph gateway features aim to reduce traffic speed.

Projects in Dunbar

Projects in Dunbar have focussed on routes to schools, and routes into town which had been shown to have high vehicle speeds even during the 20mph trial over previous years i.e. Belhaven Road, Queens Road and Kellie Road.

Radical proposals involving mini-roundabout to slow down vehicles were rejected by the community, in preference for enhanced crossing points on pedestrian desire-lines.

Opinion was divided on early proposals to create circular walking and cycling routes by closing Back Road and Eweford/Hospital Road to through traffic, and these were put aside in favour of proposals which had more consensus.

Outdoor seating and recreation area

Picnic benches signage and bins were installed on the grounds outside the Leisure Pool to create additional space for eating out, and socially distanced meeting up, and to support local businesses.

Works around John Muir Campus

There was considerable concern from parents and the school regarding crowding at the crossing point on Countess Road and the mixing of pedestrians and cyclists. To create space, Countess Crescent was closed to through traffic. The temporary barriers which were continually blown or pushed over have subsequently been replaced with planters which has been welcomed by residents of the street.



Figure 4: 'Closed' Road in Dunbar

After reviewing further options, it was agreed to create new cycle lanes on Countess Road and to widen the crossing. A contraflow cycle lane on the Lammermuir Crescent Route to school is also proposed, along with a widened path to Belhaven Road.

Belhaven road crossings and traffic calming

Pavement 'build-outs' will improve sightlines for pedestrians in places where they tend to cross the road. They will also narrow the carriageway, thereby reducing vehicle speeds.

Works around Hallhill

The sports centre grounds are very heavily used on the way to school and the car park functions as a school drop-off point. We are working with the centre manager to arrange a new path through a car park and the relocation of an obstruction (electrical box and fencing) on a pedestrian route.

Projects in North Berwick

Following initial opposition, a good working relationship has now been shaped and developed through a stakeholder group involving traders and community groups. A subset of the original proposals has been taken forward, however it is unlikely that funds will be available for traffic calming on Lochbridge Road and other areas away from the town centre.

There have been significant issues with anti-social behaviour with bollards being removed and therefore these are being replaced with planters and appropriate road markings.

Widened footways on East High Street

The original proposal to close the east end of the High Street and replace town centre parking with temporary parking on Elcho Green met with considerable opposition. Therefore a reduced scheme was implemented with no replacement parking. Space in front of the police station was reserved for loading.

Ongoing damage to the bollards through vandalism or impact has resulted in the scheme being changed to one with only planters for now. It is proposed that the full charrette trial agreed prior to the Covid-19 emergency will be initiated in the first months of the new year and will replace the temporary Spaces for People measures. However, given current restrictions we will need to monitor and may have to review timeline/delivery.

Law Road changed to one-way to allow widening of footway

This has been generally welcomed although concern has been raised by the RNLI about response times to emergencies at the harbour. An option appraisal (Appendix C) examines this.

Cyclists have also been keen to see the scheme modified to include a contra-flow arrangement for bikes. However, as the priority for this programme is to create space for social distancing at this time, and there is no room to both widen the footway and create a contraflow cycle lane, cyclists are instead being advised to dismount for the short section.

Road crossing of Trainers Brae

This involves forming a gap in the hedge and appropriate drop kerbs

Raised table on East Road

In the absence of space to widen the footway on East Road, it has been agreed to improve the crossing from Glasclune Gardens to the Lodge grounds for an attractive route from the car park to the High Street.

Appendix A – comments from online consultation (StoryMap)

Plans have been available to view online at <https://arcg.is/1LHHmz0> since September 2020. This is a summary of feedback received up to 7/12/2020. Note that proposals may have been subsequently modified to take account of these comments.

Town	Link	Comment
Musselburgh	Musselburgh North West	Respondents were generally supportive but think the cycle lane should be segregated, vehicle speeds should be reduced with a signalised pedestrian crossing provided.
Musselburgh	Inveresk Road	Cycle lanes should be segregated to discourage parking in them.
Musselburgh	Musselburgh North East	<i>These are far too modest in terms of cycling. Presumably an 'advisory cycle lane' is a painted cycle lane? If so, it's no use at all. The only cycle lanes that work are safe, segregated cycle lanes, and you don't appear to be creating any of those.</i>
Musselburgh	Pinkie Road	<i>Pinkie Road is awful to cycle on, with a succession of pinch points that can be intimidating to all cyclists, but especially novice cyclists. Reducing the speed limit and cycle symbols on road, to indicate shared space, as proposed, may help. The path that was widened to shared use standard on the south side of Pinkie Rd along the new development, should actually be signed as shared use - this allows novice cyclists to at least avoid some of the pinch points and allows off road connection with the path through the playing fields and with residential roads to Lewisvale Park. Other solutions will be required to make Pinkie Road safe and attractive for cycling.</i>
Musselburgh	Musselburgh South Central	Concerns of loss of parking on Newbigging Road with another comment stating that additional improvements would be welcome.
Musselburgh	Musselburgh South West	<i>The cycle lanes through the traffic island pinch points on Whitehill farm Road should be widened to 1.8m - they are too narrow and don't signal strongly enough to car drivers to give way if a cyclist is passing through the island. Additional route: the path running between the railway line and the Denholms and Clayknowes is a really useful link path to the station and QMU, and on to the Esk path. This could be widened and properly signed as shared use,</i>
Tranent	Tranent to Elphinstone	<i>A cycle box at the traffic lights (castle road/elphinstone road junction) would make it much safer and better for cyclists and enable other traffic to see cyclists better.</i>
Tranent	Tranent to Macmerry	<i>you need traffic calming on the a199 through macmerry the speed limit is 20mph but cars & vans are going through the village at excessive speeds my house faces onto the main road & i am always phoning the police about the speed of vehicles going through the village some of the boy racers are doing speeds around 60 to 70 mph heading to tranent in the 20mph limit the only way to slow them down is speed bumps or cameras a lot of people cross the road at the junction of whiteloch road & the a199 it is dangerous as it is trying to cross the road there because of parked vehicles without the idiots speeding through the village</i>
Haddington	West Road at Alderston Road	Mixed feedback of measures with concerns over width of road and cycle parking provision.

Haddington	West Road at Compass School	Predominantly unsupportive of measures with concerns of traffic volumes and lack of cycle provision.
Haddington	Pencaitland Road	Predominantly unsupportive of measures as respondents either feel the proposals are detrimental to cycling or other measures should be implemented instead.
Haddington	Knox Place	Predominantly unsupportive with respondents stating that the cycle lane widths are too narrow, concerns of parking but support of pavement widening
Haddington	Haddington High Street	A mixture of feedback with respondents saying proposal don't benefit cyclists, that parking should not be lost (especially entering autumn when less people will walk / cycle)
Haddington	High Street to Hardgate	Mixed responses with concerns that the designs will not improve the area for cyclists
North Berwick	Trainers Brae	Supportive (note plans to provide a permanent zebra crossing being proposed here. A barrier is required to prevent pedestrian/ cyclist walking straight out of Trainers Brae on t Grange Road.
North Berwick	Law Road	Generally supportive with suggestions for permanent measures. Many raising issues with Law Road / Grange Road junction (which is due to be signalised as part of a separate Sustrans study)
North Berwick	Lochbridge Road	Generally supportive of measures to reduce vehicle speeds but lots of additional suggestion including alternative routes (Wishart Avenue and a permanent link running parallel but to the south, behind houses)
North Berwick	East Road	Respondents were particularly supportive of this suggestion.
Dunbar	Back Road	Most respondents agree that an intervention is required here but there is no clear consensus on what. Some think the proposals don't go far enough and others think they should be scaled back.
Dunbar	Hospital Road	Respondents split on this proposal with some in favour and some against. Those against worry about the wider impacts of rerouted traffic.
Dunbar	Grammar School	General agreement on these measures and belief that vehicles speeds need reduced.
Dunbar	John Muir Campus	A complex set of suggestions (e.g. parking and pupil behaviour) which require more consideration.
Dunbar	Lochend Campus	Suggestion that Kellie Road footways should be shared use (pedestrian and cyclists) with cyclists kept off the road.
Dunbar	High Street	Respondents would like to see further improvements in this area
Dunbar	Queen's Road	Concerns that these are not temporary, are 'anti-car' and a misuse of funds
Dunbar	Kellie Road	Overall respondents happy with solutions and many wish to see further improvements
Dunbar	Belhaven Road	Mixed response. Concerns raised that these will not improve safety, are 'anti-car', a misuse of funds and are in a low footfall area. Others are happy that this will reduce vehicle speeds in the area.

Appendix B – examples of promotional materials

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Appendix C – Law Road Option Appraisal Report



East Lothian Council
Spaces for People

Law Road (north)
Option Appraisal
07/12/2020

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