

Agenda Item 5

For information and discussion – School Streets

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Summary

The draft design of the School Streets scheme around Trinity, Critchill, Oakfield and Avanti schools was published for consultation on 4th April. The consultation will run for a full month to the 4th May.

Once comments and feedback have been taken into account, the design will be finalised by the transport engineers at Sustrans. The installation is now expected to take place within the next 12 months, for a trial period of 18 months.

Background

In 2020 funding became available from the Department for Transport for "emergency" COVID active travel measures. In many places across the UK this meant cycle lanes and other interventions being put in place overnight with little or no public consultation.

Frome Town Council was granted funding to install a School Streets scheme in the Somerset/Nunney Road area as part of the 2020 emergency funding. However, when the funding was delayed Frome Town Council took the decision to withdraw the plans and to take a more gradual approach, beginning with co-design with the community.

Frome Town Council is now working with active travel charity Sustrans to engage the local community in the design of the scheme. Six public co-design events took place throughout September and October 2021, including events in Victoria Park and outside Critchill and Avanti schools.

The team of designers and engineers at Sustrans have used the ideas and feedback collected to create a draft School Streets design. It is this design that will be shared with the public next week for feedback.

Consultation

[The design in Appendix 2, which can be viewed on the website here](#), is currently available online and at Frome Town Hall. Anyone can view and comment on the designs in the following ways:

- Online <https://somensetsustainabletransport.commonplace.is/>
- In person at Frome Town Hall. The design is on display and suggestions can be left in the comments box.
- Drop-in sessions:
 - Tuesday 5th April 3-4pm at the crossroads of Nunney Road and Oakfield Road
 - Thursday 7th April 1pm - 4pm at Frome Town Hall
 - Wednesday 20th April 9am - 12pm at Frome Town Hall
 - Tuesday 26th April 3-4pm at the crossroads of Nunney Road and Oakfield Road

- Wednesday 27th April 8-9.30am at the crossroads of Nunney and Oakfield Road

What is a School Street?

School Streets vary from place to place. In most cases, traffic is restricted at either end of the school day. Residents and blue badge holders have access, but through traffic is banned at these times. This creates a safer walking and cycling zone around the school. Closures are often accompanied by other interventions such as traffic calming measures (planters, patterned designs in the road), additional crossings and signage to make the area safer for active travel.

Why School Streets?

Safety and congestion:

School run related traffic accounts for a quarter of cars on the road at drop off and pick up time increasing the risk of collisions, unlawful parking, traffic jams, road rage.

Statistics from the Department for Transport reveal that 14% of children killed on Great Britain's roads in 2018 were between the morning school run (7-9am) and 23% after school between 3-5pm. A report from insurer Admiral shows a 43% fall of road collisions during the holidays at school run time.

Health:

A 2019 Sport England Active Lives survey showed that only 47% of children and young people met the Chief Medical Officer's Physical Activity Guidelines. Around 30% of year 6 pupils in the South West are overweight

Air quality:

49% of UK school pupils are worried about air pollution near their school.

Transport creates more greenhouse gases in the UK than anything else and private vehicle use, especially cars, makes up the biggest part of this.

School Street outcomes

A review of existing school streets schemes in the UK in 2020 found¹:

An increase the number of children walking, cycling and wheeling to school without creating road safety problems.

That in almost all cases the total number of motor vehicles across school closures and neighbouring streets reduces.

Closures are supported by the majority of parents and residents living on the closed and neighbouring streets and that their support increases after any trial period.

Strong and consistent evidence that traffic displacement does not cause road safety issues of any significance and that mitigating measures, where needed, have been applied successfully.

¹ [School street closures could improve amount of walking, cycling and wheeling to school, study shows \(napier.ac.uk\)](https://www.napier.ac.uk/news/2020/10/school-street-closures-could-improve-amount-of-walking-cycling-and-wheeling-to-school-study-shows)

Perceived road safety on surrounding streets as well as the closure streets improves as active travel increases.