

From: Transition Town Chesterfield <transitionchesterfield@yahoo.co.uk>

Sent: 15 May 2020 13:52

To: ALL DCC Cllrs

Cc: Derbyshire Coalition <derbyshireclimatecoalition@googlegroups.com>

Subject: Proposal for an Climate emergency Covid transport plan for Derby and Derbyshire

Dear Derbyshire County Councillors,

The public health emergency resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic has transformed the context within which Derby City Council's and Derbyshire County Council's Transport Strategies sit:

- Vulnerable people are unable to leave their homes and many are now relying on the council to provide them with essential supplies.
- The need to impose physical distancing measures in order to reduce virus transmission has highlighted the inadequacies in the way space is allocated on the public highway and in public spaces generally.
- The need for key workers to access workplaces safely when public transport services are significantly reduced, has highlighted the currently lack of high quality routes for cycling.
- Massively reduced levels of motor traffic has encouraged many people to turn to walking and cycling, but issues remain with road danger as the police record a significant increase in speeding.
- Local businesses are struggling to survive and will need to find new ways to reach their customers.

Further, the reduction in road traffic during lockdown has resulted in an unprecedented drop in air pollution across the city and county and the whole of the UK. This has provided a rare glimpse of what life can be like when traffic is reduced. However there is a significant risk that congestion and toxic fumes will return as soon as restrictions are lifted. While many people will continue to work from home, concerns over the safety of crowded buses and trains may also cause more people to abandon public transport, increasing car use even further.

It is vital both councils take swift action to address some of the issues above and lock in some of the reduction in road traffic we have seen so far and put in place measures to make sure that when the city and county get moving again, they do so in a cleaner, safer way. Therefore, when planning a response to the current situation a key consideration should be avoiding a return to pre-existing motor traffic levels. This will require traffic restraint, together with measures to further promote and enable sustainable forms of travel.

We the undersigned Derby and Derbyshire organisations therefore urge Derby City Council and Derbyshire County Council to take the following measures in the short to medium term:

Short term (during easing of restrictions)

Reallocate more road space for people walking and cycling:

- Use temporary barriers to create additional space for pedestrians at key locations (where no traffic order is required).
- Promote suitable cycle routes for key workers, using temporary measures, as has been done in Leicester [1] and Manchester [2]. Where there isn't suitable road space consider making alternative routes traffic-free as is proposed by Chesterfield Royal Hospital [3].
- Fund and promote cycle loan and repair schemes for key workers etc, as has been done on the Isle of Wight [4].
- Make some streets access-only for motor vehicles so that road danger is reduced and there is more space for walking and cycling.
- Urge the government to introduce an immediate national ban on pavement parking and parking on grass verges, as has been the case in London for over 40 years
- Prevent parking in cycle lanes and make all advisory cycle lanes mandatory

Medium term (during lifting of restrictions)

- Introduce further pavement widening with parking suspensions where required in areas of high footfall
- Introduce 20mph speed limits in all built up and residential areas across the county, to make the streets safer for people walking and cycling and reduce the pressure on the NHS from road injuries
- Install painted only zebra crossings at the junction of all side streets with main roads as is being proposed in Manchester [2]
- Give more pedestrian priority at traffic lights and reduce waiting times to a minimum
- Introduce restrictions around schools – with no dropping off or picking up by car within 100m of the school gates [5]
- Create networks of low-traffic neighbourhoods, or 'Mini-Hollands' learning from the successful example of the Walthamstow scheme. This involves significantly restricting through-traffic in residential and shopping streets through bus gates, bollards and planters, and creating area-wide networks of direct routes for walking and cycling for all ages and abilities.
- Maintain and where feasible increase public transport capacity, even while ridership is lower, in order to allow more people to use these services during a period of social distancing. This will also ensure there are enough services to cope with greater demand and protect public safety, once social restriction measures are eased and lifted

Stop making things worse

And the city, county and districts should immediately halt the following:

- Promoting and funding the development of more road capacity including local bypasses and schemes funded under the Major Roads Network – and reallocate funding and staff to the priorities listed above
- Approving developments that fail to give priority to walking, cycling and public transport

Notes

[1] Leicester has introduced the UK's first keyworker pop-up cycleway to help key workers cycling to and from Leicester Royal Infirmary during lockdown. The route has been enormously popular and well used. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/carltonreid/2020/04/27/uks-first-pop-up-cycleway-a-keyworker-corridor-installed-in-king-richard-iiis-leicester/#55f1986d3416>

[2] Manchester has announced a £5-million plan to install pop-up cycleways and widened sidewalks, and is also asking government to approve painted only zebra crossings which will make crossing side streets safer and which can be provided at a fraction of the cost of ones with belisha beacons and

zigzags <https://www.forbes.com/sites/carltonreid/2020/05/06/greater-manchester-to-spend-5-million-on-pop-up-cycleways-widened-sidewalks/#5d09bf4f19e4>

[3] Chesterfield Royal Hospital has proposed making a country back lane access-only for cars, to provide a safe cycling route to the back entrance of the hospital for key workers

[4] The Isle of Wight Council has provided 80 bikes for loan and £50 vouchers for bike repair/parts for key workers only, providing local business for bike shops at the same time. <https://www.islandecho.co.uk/key-worker-cycle-scheme-off-to-a-flying-start-says-council/>

Paris has also recently introduced a similar voucher scheme open to everyone to encourage cycling and reduce pollution <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-52483684>

[5] 'School streets' schemes where car traffic is restricted from roads outside schools are being implemented by a growing number of local authorities with good impact on child safety, walking, cycling and levels of air pollution around school. They are also popular with local residents. <https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/get-involved/campaign-with-us/safer-routes-to-school>

This plan is supported by the following members of Derbyshire Climate Coalition and other Derby and Derbyshire organisations:

Amber Valley Green Party,
Chesterfield Climate Alliance,
Chesterfield Cycle Campaign
CLIMB Matlock Bath climate and ecological emergency group
Derby Climate Coalition,
Extinction Rebellion Chesterfield and North East Derbyshire
Extinction Rebellion Derby,
Friends of the Earth,
Friends of the Peak District (CPRE),
Hope Valley Climate Action,
Kilburn, Denby and Holbrook Labour Party,
Melbourne Area Transition
Peak Extinction Rebellion,
Sustainable Hayfield,
Transition Belper,
Transition Buxton,
Transition Chesterfield,
Whistlewood Common Limited.

Thank you.

On behalf of the above-listed organisations,

Lisa Hopkinson

