

Council's A boards ban comes into effect from today

The council's A boards ban comes into force today. No A boards or other advertising structures including upright flags or bicycles used for advertising are allowed on the city's streets anywhere – not just in the city centre.

On Thistle Street they have a novel solution : they have stencilled some 'signposts' at the end of the street. They hope that this measure will welcome and entice people into the shopping street which is home to many individual and independent shops.



Blaise from Covet on Thistle Street is taking active steps to highlight the shopping street in the face of the A board ban

The Transport and Environment Convener Cllr Lesley Macinnes said to us : "We have had a number of representations across the years about A boards and the problem that this causes for those with visual impairment or those with disability issues. It definitely causes problems and people have to weave in and out of structures that move all the time.

"They are never in one spot. In particular that is a major issue for those with visual impairment because clearly once they get to know an area they get a feeling of security as to where things are. The A boards are put out in odd spots, even just moving a few inches each day.

"This is about accessibility and equality, but it is also about the visual aspect. We need to 'dress' the city in an appropriate way."



Transport Convener Lesley Macinnes

The Transport Convener also explained earlier in the year that she recognised there could be difficulties for smaller businesses in particular, and especially those down closes for example. She said : “We need to find some ways of supporting those who will be genuinely impacted by this measure.”

Cllr Karen Doran who represents the city centre said that residents in her ward will really welcome this move.

Enforcement runs alongside the ban and an enforcement team will be out on the streets from today. Fines will be used after an initial warning. Any A boards on the street will be taken away and a storage charge made to the owner.

A spokesperson for sight loss charity RNIB Scotland said earlier in the summer : “We welcome this move by the City of Edinburgh Council to make the capital’s streets safer and more inclusive for residents and visitors with disabilities. It’s something our Street Charter has been pressing for throughout the country. While we, of course, want business to prosper, our streets should not be an obstacle course to be negotiated.”

Robin Wickes, Vice Chairman of the Edinburgh Access Panel, said: “Pavement clutter is a significant obstacle for disabled folk in Edinburgh. For wheelchair users and vision impaired people in particular navigating our streets is a real challenge, especially since many of our pavements are narrow and busy with visitors. Banning A-boards will remove a major barrier and help disabled people enjoy equality of access to

Edinburgh's streets and pavements."