

Podcast – from Lanark Road

I went out to Longstone to meet Alan Gordon who is a Longstone Community councillor, but who was speaking to me in a personal capacity as someone who lives locally.

The speed limit on Lanark Road has been reduced to 30mph as part of the changes to our roads brought about by Spaces for People. Segregated cycle lanes have been installed on both sides of the road complete with orcas and black and white wands.

You can listen to our chat about the measures below. As a cyclist he welcomes the measures to offer safer cycling space, but was quick to point out that he is also a driver and pedestrian.



Alan Gordon who was a guest o our podcast PHOTO ©2021 The Edinburgh Reporter

Alan explained that the community council are maintaining a neutral stance as they have to represent the views of all residents, but he shared with me his own thoughts on the new measures, some of which make cycling feel a bit safer. He also said that the general speed on the road has reduced, but I have to say that some vehicles were going pretty quickly – and Alan confirmed that the speed camera is about to be decommissioned.

Other cycle segregation has been installed on Longstone Road,

Inglis Green Road and a short section of Murrayburn Road. Redhall Grove has been closed to motor traffic near Longstone Primary School at the beginning and end of the school day.

The Lanark Road programme of cycle infrastructure is complete, but there are other measures just installed at Inglis Green Road and Longstone Road, and a small section near Murrayburn Road.

Alan and I cycled from the entrance to Redhall Walled Garden down to the Longstone Crescent bus stop where we could clearly see the arrangement of pavement, cycle lane, and black and white wands separating a “floating parking” space and then roadway for vehicles. It appeared to be working well.

All of these schemes are initially mapped out on the road by cones and can at first sight appear quite ugly. This one is now beginning to look embedded, but of course whether or not any of the Spaces for People schemes is ultimately retained is a matter for further discussion. The Transport and Environment Committee meets later this week when an update on Spaces for People is on the agenda.

SPACES FOR PEOPLE

Spaces for People is funded by The Scottish Government and administered by Sustrans, “the charity making it easier for people to walk and cycle”. They are custodians of the National Cycle Network and work to improve everyday journeys for everyone.

The charity welcomed the announcement last April that The Scottish Government would fully fund a new infrastructure programme for pop-up walking and cycling routes. The funding was supported by guidance and support from Transport Scotland

and Sustrans for any widening of pavements or introduction of cycle lanes.

Here in Edinburgh the city council was already on its way with policies to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality with plans such as the City Centre Transformation and the City Centre West to East Link (CCWEL). But all of these plans take time with consultation and the necessary permissions in the form of traffic orders.

Spaces for People has allowed measures to be put in place on a trial basis, with minimal consultation and without the need for traffic orders. The City of Edinburgh Council received £5.25 million of the Spaces for People funding and further funding of £1.7 million from the Sustrans Places for Everyone programme.

By the middle of May the council will have spent £4.1 million providing 39 km of segregated cycle infrastructure, 11 widened footpaths in the city centre to create safe space for pedestrians, three city centre pedestrian zones, seven areas for safe access to Spaces for Exercise, 29 roads which have been closed to vehicles near schools and 54 interventions at school gates to reduce the risk of infection.

The council is now speaking to Sustrans to agree what possible future funding there might be for the next two years. At present the government advice on exiting from lockdown is cautious, although by late June the government hopes that the whole country will be in Level 0 where certain hygiene and space measures will remain advisory.

The council has just concluded a consultation on the measures.

South West Edinburgh in Motion (SWEM) claims that the council has approved Spaces for People measures at Lanark Road and Longstone in spite of 300 objections from the public by email, objections from two community councils and serious concerns raised by Edinburgh Access Panel. They also think that Spaces

for People plans “over-reached what was legitimate emergency response and were not justifiably included under this umbrella”.

We have invited Professor Derryck Reid from SWEM to be a guest on our podcast to air his views.

Powers delegated to The City of Edinburgh Council under the terms of the Road Traffic Regulation (1984) Act allow the introduction and retention of measures to reduce the likelihood of danger to the public.

Where necessary under the Spaces for People programme, these measures have been introduced using Temporary Traffic Regulation Notice (TTRN) and Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTR0) powers.

An update on other areas of the city :

8. The table below provides an update on the schemes approved by the Transport and Environment Committee in November 2020:



Broughton Street	Pavement widening and uphill cycle land	Unfortunately, limited footpath widening possible on Broughton Street due to network capacity constraints. Specific loading requirements, for particular businesses (heavy items), require some loading bays to remain. Scheme extended to include cycle segregation on Bellevue down to Canonmills junction. Installation expected May 2021
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Broughton Street Roundabout	Revisions to the roundabout layout to reduce road space, improve the layout for pedestrians.	Improvements around roundabout to reduce road width and widen pavements. Installation expected May 2021
Restalrig Road South (Smoky Brae)	Pavement widening and uphill cycle lane	See paragraph 4.7
Starbank Road	Pavement widening with give and go traffic management.	See paragraph 4.4.9
Seafield Road East (Fillyside Road)	Pedestrian/cyclist crossing point and pavement widening	Signalised pedestrian crossing and local footpath widening to be installed near the junction May 2021
Princes Street (West End)	Footpath widening	The overhead construction hoarding and pedestrian tunnel has now been removed and the footpath partially reinstated. Increased footpath width is now available.
Musselburgh to Portobello Prom	Cycle segregation	See paragraph 4.6
Portobello Promenade	Improved signage and minor interventions to reduce speed of cyclists	Local signage improvements to be installed in April/May 2021

Duddingston Road	Cycle segregation	Design and Notification complete. Installation commenced April 2021
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