

Living Streets working on clearing the pavements

The walking charity, Living Streets, say that more than a third of those asked would visit the High Street if pavements were less cluttered. This will be the focus of a campaign which begins today.

Bins on the street, A-boards (which are illegal in Edinburgh) and too many signs can make the pavements hazardous for people getting about. The charity also claims that space has been taken away from pedestrians owing to the increase in use of e-bikes and e-scooters (which are illegal on public roads and pavements). Cyclists ought to be using space on the roads or on segregated cycle paths, so should really be taking up space used by motorists.

Campaign Lead for Transport for All, Katie Pennick recently highlighted the issues she faces on the pavement in London as a wheelchair user., and it is clear that getting about with even a small wheelchair is a problem.

Fun fact about me: I use a 'teenagers' wheelchair. It's tiny. 23inches wide.

If I'm struggling to get through these "gaps", they are completely impassable for most wheelchair users and visually impaired people with dogs.

Pavements must be kept clear enough for pedestrians.
pic.twitter.com/ey0b0awdAr

– Katie Pennick (@KatiePennick) [May 3, 2021](#)

Katie said: “For wheelchair users, visually impaired people, and many other disabled pedestrians – street clutter can turn pavements into treacherous, disorienting, and difficult routes. A poorly placed A-board can put an end to a particular journey. Having to navigate constant obstacles puts many people off from walking and wheeling, excluding them from the benefits of active travel.

“It’s vital that we remove the barriers on our pavements to enable more people to enjoy moving around their local communities with freedom, ease, and independence.”

#CutTheClutter Week of Action from 12 to 18 July is supported by British Cycling, Cycling UK, Guide Dogs, RNIB and Transport for All.

Stuart Hay, Director of Living Streets Scotland said: “Our Edinburgh Living Streets Group was instrumental in a ban on advertising boards being introduced in the capital. We want to see action to reduce pavement clutter happening across the nation.

“Clear pavements will make it easier for people to get out more, tackling inactivity, isolation and poor air quality. Helping people feel more confident to use their local streets will also increase footfall for local businesses.”

To take part in the Week of Action, visit livingstreets.org.uk/Clutter