

Councillors welcome doctors' support for active travel measures

Edinburgh's Transport Convener has welcomed the call by more than 140 medical professionals to keep and expand upon measures introduced to support active travel during lockdown.



BEST Lanark Road cycle protest. Photo: © 2021, Martin P. McAdam www.martinmcadam.com

We [published the open letter from the medical professionals here](#) on Wednesday morning.

In the letter doctors and health workers in Edinburgh expressed support for the council's Travelling Safely programme.

The group wrote about the positive impacts of more active travel on health, inequality, air quality and tackling the climate crisis.

[In June](#), the council's Transport and Environment Committee approved proposals to retain some of the schemes on an experimental basis, to remove others post-pandemic and to engage further with communities on options for a handful of measures.

Cllr Lesley Macinnes, Transport and Environment Convener, said: "The collective voice of this wide range of medical and health professionals is incredibly welcome. We've been vocal about our commitment to encourage travel by foot, wheel or bike, and the benefits this brings, but to have the support of the medical profession demonstrates just how crucial investment in safe, protected routes is.

"Over the last year and a half we've introduced changes which have helped many people to feel newly confident about walking, cycling and wheeling safely. There are, of course, tens of thousands of people in Edinburgh who don't have access to a car. We now have the opportunity to extend the lifespan of many of these measures and to improve upon them so that they work for as many people as possible.

"The evidence is clear and well expressed in this letter – there's so much to gain from active travel, in terms of health, quality of life and in limiting our impact on the climate. We simply cannot return to the status quo, where private car journeys dominate the streets. By retaining the majority of schemes introduced through Spaces for People, we're laying the foundations for a happier, healthier future for everyone here."

Cllr Karen Doran, Transport and Environment Vice Convener, said: "It's indisputable that walking, wheeling or cycling, whether for leisure or commuting, has a positive impact on our health, our state of mind and our pockets, as well as the air we breathe. We wholeheartedly recognise and support these calls to retain and expand on the measures we've introduced during the pandemic. "Temporary protected cycle lanes, widened pavements and quiet routes have helped families to walk safely to school, shoppers to spend time strolling through some of our iconic city centre streets and people trying out cycling for the first time.

We really want to continue delivering these benefits, and we'll be working hard to make sure the measures we have kept do just that."

Find out more about the [Travelling Safely programme](#) on the Council website.



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