

# **Play is the order of the day in Marchmont**

**Campaign for safer streets,  
Blackford Safe Routes, set up a  
Play Street where families gathered  
on a sunny Saturday morning last  
weekend.**

Children were armed with chalk to temporarily decorate the street and played with bubbles, skipping ropes and roller blades.

The chalk was also used to mark out what a realigned junction with wider pavements to make crossing the street easier for pedestrians to cross safely.

Campaigners say there is a great deal of space used to store cars and vehicles which could be space for the city's children to play safely. The grown ups used it to have a coffee and a chat in the open air while also keeping an eye on the children. Various politicians and council candidates dropped by to have a look for themselves.

Daniel Johnson MSP said: "It was great to see the street come to life. I really enjoyed the discussions about the possibilities of re-thinking how we use these street spaces."

Transport Convener, Cllr Lesley Macinnes said: "It was really great to see the kids and adults enjoying the space to play and have so much ease of a beautiful spring day. Kudos to all who organised it."



Edith 9, Tarn 9, Lyra 9, Yasmin 10 and Tilly 9. Photo: © 2022, Martin P. McAdam [www.martinmcadam.com](http://www.martinmcadam.com)

Euan Maclean of Blackford Safe Routes said: “We used the council’s play street scheme to apply for a temporary road closure of the junction with Spottiswoode Road and Spottiswoode Street. This gave an opportunity to invite everyone from the local community to come and enjoy the space free from vehicular traffic. One of the main motivations of the event was to allow people to see how much of our public realm is given over to vehicles and access for vehicles. This particular junction is very wide, but between two residential streets where only local access is necessary. We encouraged local kids to use chalk to redesign what they would like to see at the junction, and the result was joyful and spontaneous free play enjoyed joyously by all.

“This particular junction is a route to and from school for hundreds of school children from James Gillespie’s Primary and High Schools and yet is a long crossing with poor sightlines. With political will and courage there is the opportunity to

redesign such spaces with parklets, trees which provide sustainable drainage, and play-making spaces which enhance the local community. Liveable spaces promote well-being not only through greater safety, reduced noise and localised pollution but also through promoting connectedness for all members of the community. By deprioritising vehicular traffic, but maintaining access for those that require it, everyone in the community can benefit, and play streets such as this are an opportunity to show what is possible throughout our city if we value liveability and social connectedness above car use.”

The event organisers applied for a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order to close the street with barriers for a few hours. They had to complete a risk assessment and also clear up afterwards.





Tarn 9, Lyra 9, Yasmin 10 and Tilly 9. Photo: © 2022, Martin P. McAdam [www.martinmcadam.com](http://www.martinmcadam.com)