

# Call for action on traffic – Car Free Day

## CAMPAIGNERS CALL FOR ACTION ON TRAFFIC ON CAR FREE DAY

Environmental campaigners say that all councils in Scotland should be working to reduce the numbers of cars on the road, as people across the country celebrate Car Free Day.

Today is Car Free Day – an annual event to highlight how neighbourhoods and communities could be improved with fewer vehicles on the road. Today and over the weekend, there will be events across Scotland as grassroots groups and councils try to raise awareness of the alternatives to car use.

Fewer cars can create stronger economies and communities by boosting small businesses and local high streets, and improving public health. Air pollution primarily from traffic is responsible for 2,500 premature deaths in Scotland every year.

To coincide with Car Free Day The City of Edinburgh Council will “close” Waverley Bridge to hold events on it but not until Sunday 2 October (although the road is already restricted to taxis, cycles and some other vehicles, and not generally open to all traffic)

Kidical Mass is also being held in Edinburgh this Saturday with feeder rides.

<https://twitter.com/EdCriticalMass/status/1572611174306582529?s=20&t=jJJgBSf6swRz0mjYpnBgZQ>

Friends of the Earth say that new research launched by the Clean Cities Campaign found that 62% of people support the

idea of one car-free day a week, to open the streets to walking and cycling and improve air quality. If this was implemented in major European cities, it could save between 541,000- 945,000 barrels of oil per year.

The Scottish Government has pledged to reduce total car km travelled by 20% by 2030. A final plan will be published on how to achieve this before the end of the year.

Gavin Thomson, transport campaigner at Friends of the Earth Scotland, said: "Transport is Scotland's biggest source of climate emissions, it's creating dangerous levels of air pollution and it's costing people far too much money. It needs to change.

"This Car Free Day, there'll be street parties and bike rides and community-building activities that aren't possible if our towns and cities are filled with cars. When we remove cars, like on streets that become pedestrianised, we open up public space for communities and businesses.

"The Scottish Government has committed to reducing car travel by 20%, but we've yet to see any detail on how they will deliver this. It's clear that our cities should be limiting cars, opening up space for communities. A regular car free day in cities would be a great idea."



Kidical Mass Edinburgh in May. Photo: © 2022, Martin P. McAdam  
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