

# Plan to move bus stops is “worrying”

A plan to move bus stops away from Edinburgh’s most dangerous junctions has been branded as “worrying” by public transport campaigners.

Councillors were warned that such a move risked violating the council’s own street design guidance and would put bus users “at the back of the queue”.

The local authority has published a list of 40 junctions across the city earmarked for safety improvements based on factors such as the number of casualties recorded, potential hazards and volume of traffic.

The top 10 ‘most dangerous’ – which include Haymarket, Tollcross and the West End of Princes Street which tops the list – are set for “longer term, substantive improvements” according to a report which went before the Transport Committee this week.

However, the classification of bus stops near junctions as “hazards” in the report, which suggests looking at whether stops “can be relocated” as a means of improving pedestrian safety, set “alarms bells ringing” amongst a group which represents the views of bus users in the capital.



Chris Day out on Princes Street with fellow member of EBUG Jennifer Marlborough. Photo: © 2022, Martin P. McAdam [www.martinmcadam.com](http://www.martinmcadam.com)

Members of Edinburgh Bus Users Group (EBUG) spoke at the meeting on Thursday and slammed the proposals.

Chris Day said: "Since we were set up in 2019 we feel we have had to fight to prevent bus stops being seen as a default option to be removed or relocated if there is any difficulty on the street either in a new project or in an existing scenario.

"We were particularly exercised by the definition of bus stops as a hazard, rather than an asset and the first option that is selected or identified is relocate them."

Mr Day said this would be in breach of the council's own street guidance, which states: "Bus stops should be located at or near road junctions (or other pedestrian/cycle routes) to maximise route choice to the stop. This placement can help buses enter/exit the stop without being impeded."

It adds: "Once installed, a bus stop is considered a permanent fixture so should be positioned appropriately from the outset.

Moving bus stops will only be considered if there would be clear benefits for passengers or the bus service."

Mr Day continued: "Not only does it contravene the council's guidance, it comprises a case of bus users needs being put at the back of the queue again, it clears the way for longer walking routes to and from bus stops."

Fellow EBUG member Sally Millar said as a bus users "who doesn't walk easily or quickly" she was "appalled that bus stops are described as a hazard or a barrier to safety rather than a necessary resource for citizens".

She said: "I think it's just wrong and I'm really concerned that it's evidence of an insidious attitude creep where bus stops are presumed to be unimportant and dispensable.

"I'm already suffering as are many older people by the removal of a number of bus stops throughout the centre of the city.

"Of course we take the safety of all road users, all pedestrians, all cyclists very very seriously but we would like to see a strategy that includes both this and the needs of bus users."

Ms Millar said the report was a "worrying warning" that the junctions review would become a "carte blanche to whip out a few more bus stops".

She added: "Real people need those bus stops."

Transport convener Scott Arthur stressed that bus stops "aren't a nuisance," but added: "We do have to get the balance right with these things."

The report said: "40 junctions assessed have been prioritised for improvements. It is proposed to progress feasibility work for longer term, substantive improvements that can be made for people walking, wheeling and cycling at the top 10 junctions, where these are not already being developed as part of existing work programmes."

It revealed the 10 most hazardous Edinburgh junctions as:

West End (Princes St Lothian Rd, South Charlotte St, Shandwick Pl, Queensferry St, Hope St)

Tollcross (Earl Grey St Lauriston Pl, Brougham St, Home St, West Tollcross)

Haymarket Junction (Morrison St, Dalry Rd, Haymarket Ter, West Maitland St)

East End (Princes St, North Bridge, Waterloo Pl, Leith St)

Milton Link Junction (Milton Rd, Sir Harry Lauder Rd, Milton Rd East, Milton Link)

Holy Corner (Morningside Rd, Colinton Rd, Bruntsfield Pl, Chamberlain Rd)

Crewe Toll Roundabout (Ferry Rd, Crewe Rd North and South, Telford Rd)

St Mary's Street (Pleasance, Cowgate, St Mary's St, Holyrood Rd)

King's Road Junction (Kings Rd, Sir Harry Lauder Rd, Seafield Rd East, Portobello High St, Inchview Ter)

Maybury Junction (Glasgow Rd, Maybury Rd, Turnhouse Rd)



Princes Street ghost bike where 23-year-old Zhi Min Soh was killed by the driver of a bus. PHOTO Martin P McAdam  
*by Donald Turvill, Local Democracy Reporter.*

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