

Corstorphine Connections giving locals lots to talk about

The six month long trial of road changes in Corstorphine has become the talk of the steamie, with many people vocally against the introduction of the Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN).

There are two main parts to what is already installed – the imposition of a bus gate at certain times of the day on Manse Road which runs past Iceland to join St John's Road, and the closure of Featherhall Crescent from the B701 which runs north south to the roundabout at the southern end of Drum Brae with a pocket park. This use of modal filters or planters is fairly usual for an LTN which does not stop anyone driving to their front door, it simply stops up some routes which are otherwise used by drivers cutting through a street which can otherwise become quite quiet.

Here, in a long read article, we talked to Cllr Arthur the Transport Convener about the Manse Road bus gate, chatted with him about the pocket park on Featherhall Crescent and the public meeting which he did not attend, and we have added the comments from those who were at the public meeting last week in video form – although their comments were also added to the article we wrote about the meeting which you will find [here](#). We didn't really even discuss the Spaces for People measures introduced outside the local primary school where the pavement

has been widened with black and white bollards, but the mere fact that the measures are still in place may speak for itself.

Manse Road



Manse Road signage © 2023 Martin McAdam

We met Transport Convener Cllr Scott Arthur on Manse Road around 9.30am on Tuesday to have a look at the bus gate there.

There were literally dozens of vehicle drivers progressing through the signalled junction despite the green painted area at the traffic lights clearly showing it is a bus gate. This means that only buses, cycles and taxis are allowed access all the time and cars are prohibited between 8am and 10am and 2.45pm and 6.30pm on weekdays.

Cllr Arthur explained that local discussions about these measures go back before he was elected in 2017, and the community council have for a while discussed traffic issues in this area coupled to air quality problems on St John's Road.

He said: "One or two years ago, a survey was done with local people that showed that 66% of people thought there were issues with traffic in the area. More people were more likely to have those concerns if they had a disability or mobility problems. So it's really based on that, that these plans have come forward."

But he admitted after watching the traffic for just a few minutes that there may be a problem here and that it would be possible for council officers to look again at the signage. He explained he had taken part in a two hour long Q&A with Corstorphine Community Council during which some had mentioned there was too much signage, others that there was too little, and these views have to be balanced.

There is an arrow painted north to south on a short two way section of Manse Road for access to a block of flats which the Transport Convener said might be in the wrong place but he confirmed he will go back and check with his team.

An accusation from some at the public meeting arranged in St Margaret's Park last week by campaign group Accessible Corstorphine for All was that the council just is not listening. But Cllr Arthur said that is not the case. He said: "The consultation is still ongoing. So we are in the six months' phase where people can submit open comments to the

council about how it's working. And what we're really wanting people to say is what they think is working, or what they think's not working, what we can do more of what we can do less of.

"Remember, we've got this overall aim of addressing this issue that two thirds of people living in the area that was an issue with too much traffic.

"This is the first try if you like in trying to resolve that problem. And if it doesn't work, we can fine tune it. And we can we can look at other issues. But I think it's really important that we address this issue that so many people in the area think there's an issue with traffic."

[Corstorphine- chatting to the Transport Convener at the bus gate](#) from [The Edinburgh Reporter On Vimeo](#) on [Vimeo](#).

The new measures in Corstorphine to create a "safer and more comfortable environment' for people living there who walk, cycle, wheel or spend time in the streets and outdoor spaces commenced on 24 May 2023. The road closures and other means of stopping through traffic will be in place for six months, running alongside an open public consultation where everyone can have their say on the Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders (ETROs) affecting roads in the area.

There is more information on the Corstorphine Connections page on the council website [here](#).

Pocket park and public meeting

The other main measure which has been introduced is the installation of a pocket park on Featherhall Crescent. This has the effect of stopping up the roads to the east of it meaning that no vehicles can exit here onto the B701. While we moved from Manse Road to the park we chatted with Cllr Arthur

about the measures in Corstorphine some more.



Some of those who attended St Margaret's Park to hear speeches against the introduction of the LTN measures © 2023 Martin McAdam

Here he addresses some of the criticism he received for not attending the public meeting in St Margaret's Park last week attended by around 400 people.

Alex Cole Hamilton MSP for Edinburgh Western addressed the hundreds assembled saying that it was shameful that Cllr Scott Arthur was not there. Mr Cole Hamilton said: "He should be here to hear what you think."

Cllr Arthur replied explaining that it was his misgivings about the group Accessible Corstorphine for Everyone who convened the meeting that prevented him going. He said: "I did raise concerns with the campaign group, which is running here about the verbal attacks on named members of council staff. And also there were some screenshots I've seen about people promoting illegal activity, removing signage, etc. And so I

felt under those circumstances I couldn't take part." He also said that Mr Cole Hamilton was fully aware of his reasons for not being there before the meeting last Tuesday.

He said he would be happy to meet and talk to anyone about the design and the measures themselves, and that there is to be a meeting in August at the City Chambers. In addition he has replied to the chairperson of ACE to arrange a one to one meeting with her sometime soon.

The Transport Convener said: "I want to address that statistic about two thirds of the people living within the Connections area feeling that too much traffic in the area was a problem. You know, that really has to be addressed, and I'm open to working with the community to talk about it talk about different ways of doing that – that offer's on the table."



Cllr Scott Arthur talked to The Edinburgh Reporter about the Low Traffic Neighbourhood measures being trialled in Corstorphine PHOTO ©2023 The Edinburgh Reporter



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Public comments from the meeting on 27 June 2023.

The Edinburgh Reporter interviewed some of those who attended the public meeting in St Margaret's Park on 27 June.

Here is what they had to say. [Read more about the meeting here.](#)

[Corstorphine voices](#) from [The Edinburgh Reporter On Vimeo](#) on [Vimeo](#).

The speeches at St Margaret's Park were outlined [here in a previous article](#). and in case you have a spare hour they are also saved on Vimeo as a reference for anyone who was not

there.