

People-friendly streets FAQs

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1. Why are people-friendly streets being created now?

In 2019, under the “liveable neighbourhoods” banner, the council committed to improve all residential areas in Islington to create a healthy, fair, accessible and enjoyable environment, and to enable local people to walk and cycle safely. We set this out in our draft Islington Transport Strategy; our Air Quality Strategy; and our draft Net Zero Carbon Strategy, Vision 2030.

We have been listening to local people. They tell us that they want their streets to be friendlier places that are easier for everyone to use; to enjoy being outside in clean air; to make it safer for walking, cycling, using buggies and wheelchairs; to relax or play.

The current Covid-19 health emergency has made it necessary to accelerate these plans to make sure that everyone in Islington is kept safe and able to enjoy their streets while, at the same time, socially distancing.

To help keep our streets friendly, safe and healthy for everyone we are introducing people-friendly streets on a trial basis, with a full public consultation as part of the trial.

Transport for London modelling predicts that, without action, traffic volumes may get much worse than before the crisis - we must act now to create more

space for local people to walk, cycle, use buggies and wheelchairs as a safe alternative to using public transport.

The development of technology, including sat-nav, has led to an increase in vehicles cutting through residential areas as they travel through Islington. As more people may choose to drive as lockdown restrictions are eased, this is predicted to increase, making streets more dangerous and unhealthy for the people who live on them. This is why we are taking action now.

2. How can I have my say?

We launched our [Commonplace](#) public engagement platform at the end of May 2020. This enables us to capture a larger, and more detailed, real-time view of local peoples' suggestions than would be possible through our traditional means of consultation (although formal consultations will follow as part of the overall implementation of the scheme).

Furthermore, by enabling local people to view others' ideas and opinions, the platform offers a transparent and community-focused approach to planning the future of Islington's neighbourhoods.

To ensure that you can have your say in how the measures are working, we have chosen to implement the scheme on a temporary basis, under an experimental traffic order. This means that during the first six months you can give us your views on how the measures are working and we can make any necessary changes so that the new people-friendly streets work as well as possible.

For more information, including on how you can object to or comment on the measures, please see the FAQ on how experimental traffic orders work.

You will also have a further chance to have your say on whether we make the measures in your people-friendly neighbourhood permanent, change them or remove them. A full public consultation will take place after 12 months to find out what you think of the measures. This will allow enough time for you to experience the changes and for traffic patterns to have settled down.

Based on feedback and monitoring data, we will decide whether the measures will be changed, made permanent or removed at the end of the 18-month trial period. There may be an opportunity to improve your area with permanent features such as greening, tree planting and play-spaces.

3. What is a traffic filter?

Traffic filters are restrictions in the street to prevent motor vehicles passing through, either by presenting a physical barrier, such as bollards or planters, or by camera enforcement. Camera enforcement is used to enable buses and emergency vehicles to access the area. Each people-friendly neighbourhood

requires the installation of a small number of traffic filters. The location of these filters prevents motor vehicles cutting through the local area.

4. Will there be an increase in traffic on the main roads?

People-friendly streets make it easier and safer for people to walk, cycle and use wheelchairs, buggies and scooters, by introducing measures to stop traffic from taking short cuts through residential areas.

It is likely that in the beginning there will be an increase in traffic on the surrounding main roads while people adjust to the new measures. Evidence from similar projects in London shows that over time this increased traffic volume reduces as people make different travel decisions in response to them – main road traffic spreads out across the day, bus journey times are not significantly increased and air quality in main roads does not get worse.

We know that some local residents need to use cars to get about. Making the streets more pleasant and safer to walk and cycle, use buggies and wheelchairs encourages those who don't need to leave their cars behind for shorter journeys.

5. If there is an increase in traffic on the main roads what can be done?

We will keep the impacts of all changes under close review by monitoring traffic patterns on roads, including main roads, following the introduction of each people-friendly streets plan.

This information together with feedback from local people will be used to inform future measures to improve main roads for those who live, work, shop or go to school on them. These measures might include better and wider pavements, more and improved pedestrian crossings, more seating, new cycle lanes, speed restrictions, measures to protect bus journey times, more trees or planting, and banned right turns to decrease any congestion arising.

We're already carrying out many actions to make all of our streets more people-friendly and improve the air we breathe, such as our ambitious School Streets programme, installing new electric vehicle charging points and electrifying the council's vehicle fleet. The Mayor of London is also extending the Ultra-Low Emission Zone to include all of Islington.

6. Can I still drive inside a people-friendly neighbourhood?

Yes. It is vital that people who need to use their cars, such as blue badge holders, can still do so. This is not a pedestrianisation scheme. If you have a car or other motor vehicle you will still be able to drive to your home, as will visitors, but you may need to take a different route. Trade and delivery vehicles will still be able to access all addresses.

Near some filters we may need to remove a small number of parking bays although we will keep this to a minimum and, if needed, we will try to find alternative locations for those we remove.

7. Will there be exemptions for residents or blue badge holders?

Residents and blue badge holders will not be able to drive legally through the traffic filters, but all residents will still be able to drive to and from their homes, and people will still be able to access all amenities in the area by car.

8. What will the impacts be on people with disabilities?

Anyone who can currently access their home by motor vehicle, private car or taxi will still be able to after the people-friendly neighbourhood is installed. People who use walking aids, wheelchairs or mobility scooters will find the streets quieter, safer and more enjoyable with lower amounts of traffic, and fewer drivers using residential areas for quick short-cuts. The council will ensure that dropped kerbs and level surfaces are kept clear of unnecessary obstructions.

People with visual impairments will benefit from reduced traffic and road danger, and the reduction in noise should help with navigating their local area more easily. It's also important to note that there are no plans to include any new "shared space" areas. Pavement space will be maintained for people walking or wheeling. The quieter and calmer streets should also make the streets more welcoming to people with cognitive disabilities.

9. What is an Experimental Traffic Order?

An Experimental Traffic Order is like a permanent Traffic Regulation Order in that it is a legal document that imposes traffic and parking restrictions. However, unlike a Traffic Regulation Order an Experimental Traffic Order can only stay in force for a maximum of 18 months while the effects are monitored and assessed.

An Experimental Traffic Order is made under Sections 9 and 10 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

Once an Experimental Traffic Order comes into force there is a six month period in which objections can be made. If the ETO is subsequently modified, objects can be made in the six months following from the date of the changes.

Any formal objection must be in writing, must refer to the relevant area, and must state the grounds on which it is made. Objections should be sent to:

Email: PublicRealm@islington.gov.uk

Post: Public Realm, 1 Cottage Road, London, N7 8TP.

Please note that any formal objection that is submitted may become a public document and could be published.

In addition to the objection period described above there will be a second opportunity to have your say during the full public consultation which will take place after 12 months to find out what you think of the measures. Based on feedback and monitoring data, we will decide whether the measures will be changed, made permanent or removed at the end of the 18-month trial period.