

Dear All,

We are writing to seek your initial views (as key 'stakeholders') on the proposal to introduce Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders (ETRO) to facilitate the introduction of "School Streets" within parts of Oxfordshire as part of our Department of Transport-funded active travel programme.

What is a School Street ? A School Street is a timed road closure that restricts access for motor vehicles at school drop-off and pick-up times. The aim is to create a safe, welcoming and attractive environment where children, parents and teachers can walk, cycle, scoot or park and walk to school with less risk of air pollution and traffic congestion. Creating a car-free environment outside school gates will also support social distancing when children return to school following lockdown.

Why we are doing a trial ? School Streets will create places where children can thrive, be healthier and happier because they are:

- Being more active,
- Enjoying improved air quality,
- Getting a boost to confidence from active travel, and
- Getting more chances to be sociable.

Which schools are taking part ? Working with Sustrans (<https://www.sustrans.org.uk>), six schools within Oxford, Bicester and Witney have been selected to take part in the pilot of the scheme:

- Oxford – East Oxford School,
- Oxford – St Christophers School,
- Oxford – Windmill Primary School,
- Bicester – Bure Park Primary,
- Bicester – St Edburgs School, and
- Witney – St Marys C of E Infants School.

How does a School Street work ? During closure times at pick-up and drop-off, roads around the school site will only be open to people walking, cycling, and anyone in a vehicle with a valid exemption permit. A lead steward assisted by volunteers from the school and local community will manage and marshal the road closures by operating temporary barriers and opening them for any exempt vehicles. Exempt motorists include residents with vehicles registered to address on the closed streets, blue badge holders, emergency vehicles, plus any council organised home to school transport for students with additional needs. We will also continue to work with the schools to ensure that anyone with specific needs is not affected.

The attached plans provide a general overview of which roads within the vicinity of the school will be affected and at what times the restriction will apply, whilst additional information on the School Streets scheme can be found here:

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-transport/emergency-active-travel-fund/active-travel/school-streets>

Subject to the outcome of this preliminary consultation with key stakeholders, the start date for the ETROs would be dependent on central government guidance on school closures and the lifting of lockdown in Oxfordshire. The progress of the ETRO will be monitored during the first 6 weeks, and if successful we would aim to continue running School Streets for the full 18 months. A general statutory consultation process on the ETRO would run for a period of six months, during which objections and other representations will be invited from any parties, including members of the public, with an interest. The ETRO can be abandoned or amended at any point should the Council deem this to be necessary. Any amendment would be subject to a further consultation.

Please could you respond to this preliminary consultation by 1500 on **Friday 12th February 2021**. However, please do let me know if you need additional time to consider your response.

Many Thanks and Kind Regards,

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