

News release: Chelmsford semi-permanent street improvement measures

Release issued in partnership by Essex County Council and Chelmsford City Council

More progress on Chelmsford's Safer, Greener, Healthier street improvements with introduction of semi-permanent measures

Following June's successful introduction of temporary Safer, Greener, Healthier public safety measures in Chelmsford city centre, from week commencing 3 August Essex County Council will start to upgrade the existing street equipment used, by introducing new types of semi-permanent barrier and other items that need less maintenance, are more robust, help identification of the new areas and reduce confusion with routine roadworks.

In June, Essex County Council worked rapidly with Chelmsford City Council to introduce temporary on-street safety measures along key routes in the city centre, to enable people to social distance whilst shopping, working and visiting.

Since the introduction of the initial measures residents, special interest groups and businesses have made suggestions for improvements.

Cllr Kevin Bentley, Essex County Council Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, has listened, taken expert advice and approved scheme modifications which address local needs but also deliver the objective of supporting public safety.

Examples have included built out bus stops in Duke Street to enable bus passengers to get safely on and off the buses; the reinstatement of the splitter island on Victoria Road in the vicinity of The Cathedral School to support safe crossing for children and other pedestrians; and tweaks to barriers to allow better access to certain buildings.

In addition, as we move to the next phase, changes in response to the feedback we have received will also include the provision of a delivery layby on Duke Street to facilitate deliveries to business without hindering the movement of cyclists and vehicles; and clearer signage regarding the 20pmh limits within the area.

Essex Highways is now working to make the changes clearer and easier to maintain and will upgrade existing traffic management equipment being used with 'semi-permanent' measures. This will include different forms of barrier and lane

separators and other physical measures. Where possible, the semi-permanent changes will be made distinguishable from roadworks. These measures will remain in place whilst long-term plans are considered and developed.

Feedback and ideas from everyone are still very welcome via SGH.Routes@essex.gov.uk as the discussions about longer-term aims and plans to make our streets Safer, Greener and Healthier continue. However the fundamental aims remain the same: to enable people to social distance effectively on busy routes and outside shops; to encourage safer, easier journeys on foot and by bike instead of always opting for the car and to assist with longer-term government plans to reduce congestion and pollution by providing more opportunity to use more sustainable forms of travel.

Councillor Bentley said: “More robust and visually better barriers and signs are useful but what has been really valuable is the public engagement and variety of ideas and comments coming into us from all sides. We had to install these measures at speed once government said go but now we are developing a more mature understanding of what works best for everyone and what will best help us achieve our Safer, Greener and Healthier goals, however we get about.”

Cllr Stephen Robinson, Leader of Chelmsford City Council, said, “It would be great if we could seize the opportunity to permanently increase the amount of cycling and walking in Chelmsford. It’s healthier for people and better for the environment. These city centre measures go some way towards doing that.”

Mike Wray, Manager of the One Chelmsford BID, said: “One Chelmsford supports the initiative to make the social distancing measures put in place in Chelmsford city centre semi-permanent. The initiative will continue to assist those cycling and walking in the area, hopefully making people feel relaxed and comfortable whilst going about their business, with more than enough space to comply with government guidance on social distancing”.

Now is the time to rethink your travel for short journeys to help ease congestion, clean up air pollution, and improve your health. To help you make the change, you can also now visit the [Stop. Swap. GO! website](#) to find out more and how you can win prizes with a 60 Day Challenge currently on offer.

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