



ACTION PLAN: WALKING PLACES PROJECT REPORT

Hawick Action Plan Report

Living Streets

April 2024

Introduction

This report describes the findings of the Walking Places project in Hawick which has been delivered by Living Streets.

The Walking Places project aims to support walking and wheeling in Hawick with Stirches and Trinity Primary schools as the two centres of 20-minute neighbourhoods.

Living Streets is the UK charity for everyday walking. We want a nation where walking is the natural choice for everyday local journeys. Our mission is to achieve a better walking environment and inspire people to walk more.

The Walking Places project is funded by Paths for All through the Active Nation Fund.

Walking Places brings together Living Streets' expertise across our school programme and community work. It incorporates the following elements:

- **WOW – the walk to school challenge from Living Streets:** WOW sees pupils record how they travel to school. If they travel actively, they are rewarded with a badge at the end of the month. This has been launched with Stirches and Trinity Primary schools to support walking to school.
- **Living Streets' Out & About approach:** This initiative helps people to remain or become more physically active in their community, to stay socially connected, and to be active in improving the walking environment for everyone.
- **Living Streets' community and school Street Reviews:** Street reviews evaluate the walking quality of local streets and help build a case for improvement to the walking environment. Stirches and Trinity Primary schools and members of the Hawick community have participated in a community and/or school street review.
- **20-minute neighbourhoods:** This approach focuses on walkable neighbourhoods, where people can get most of their daily needs within walking distance. In this case, Stirches and Trinity are the focus for the 20-minute neighbourhood in Hawick.

The following infographic shows which features should be found in an ideal 20-minute neighbourhood.





Fig 1.1 - an infographic showing the features of a 20-minute neighbourhood

Living Streets talked to lots of people in the local community about their views and experiences. They asked what issues stopped residents from walking more in Hawick. This took place through street reviews, surveys, and meetings with different groups.

Local context and changes

There are two local projects, which have links to walking in Hawick:

Hawick Local Place Plan

The Hawick Local Place Plan is a community-driven initiative to shape the future of Hawick in Scotland. Developed through collaboration with residents and businesses, the plan outlines targets for regeneration and investment projects. This people-centred approach aims to revitalise Hawick and create a thriving community.

Draft projects relevant to walking are improving town movement networks and enhanced public spaces to boost attractiveness and safety.





Fig 1.2 - A display board for one of the Key Priorities of the Hawick Local Plan

Hawick Flood Protection Scheme

The Hawick Flood Protection Scheme is one of Scotland's largest flood defence projects. This project aims to safeguard the town from future flooding from the river Teviot, while minimizing disruption to residents, businesses and wildlife.

There has been some impact on walking due to road and path closures near the river, but the reopening of some paths has allowed more direct access for pedestrians across the town. The works are due to be completed during 2024.

The two maps below show the 20-minute neighbourhoods in Hawick, focussed around Stirches Primary School (north of Hawick town centre) and Trinity Primary School (east of Hawick town centre).



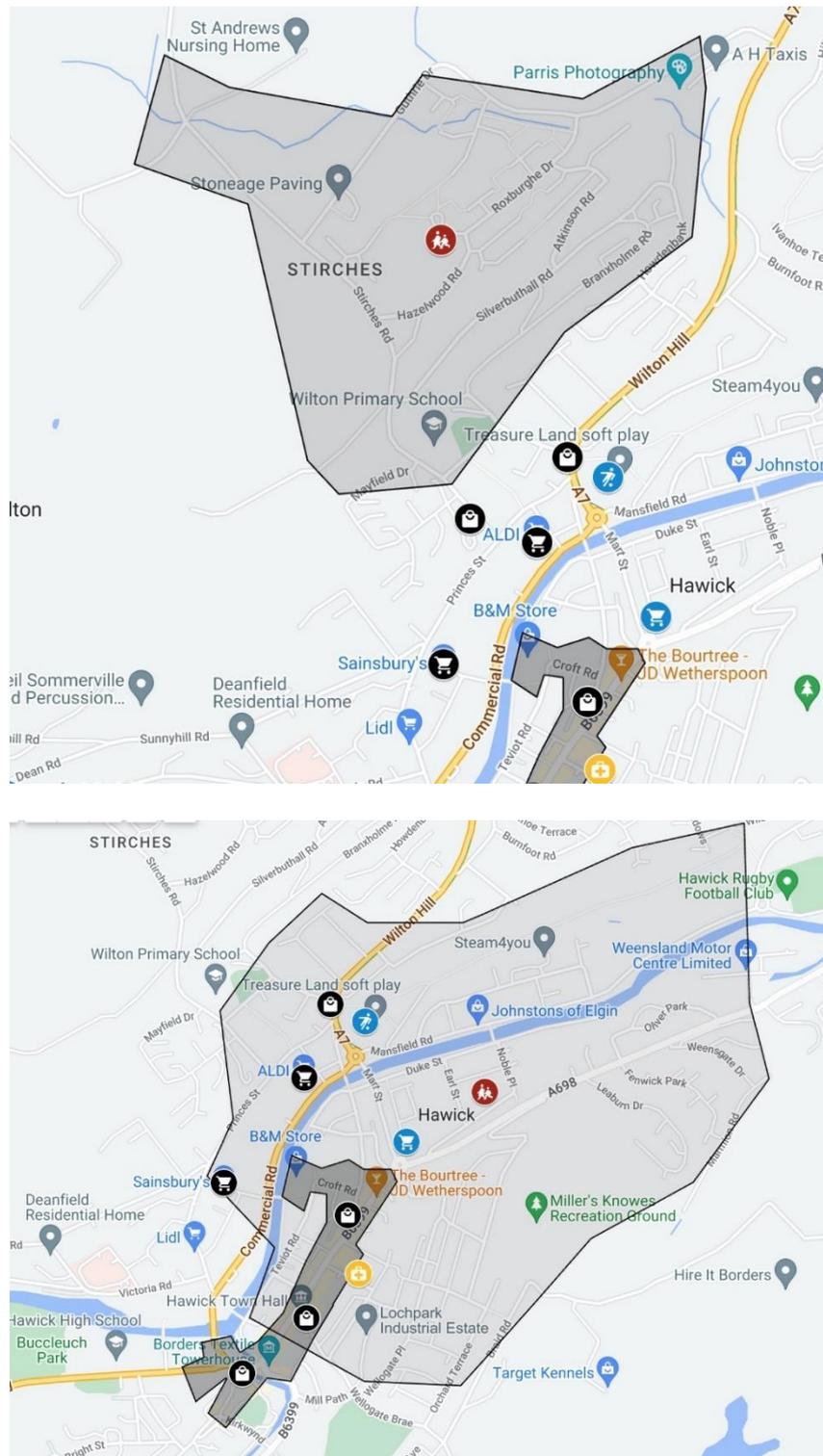


Fig 1.3 - A map showing the 20-minute neighbourhood focussed on Stirches Primary School and Trinity Primary School. NB: The light grey area indicates the 20-minute neighbourhoods. The dark grey area indicates Hawick Town Centre



Community and school consultation

The following community and school consultation took place:

- An online survey was conducted between November 2023 and March 2024
- A street review took place with residents to identify issues while walking locally in April 2024
- Sessions with local community forums took place, including:
 - Super Lunch Club consultation in December 2023
 - What Matter's Hub in January 2024
 - Older People Active Lives, Cyrenians between December 2023 and March 2024
- WOW School launched in Striches in March 2024
- WOW School launched Trinity in November 2023
- School Street Reviews with Striches and Trinity Primary Schools, between March and April 2024
- Striches PS Playground Session in January 2024

Data analysis

The following section shows a summary of the key findings from the survey conducted in Hawick between October 2023 and April 2024.

Walking experience

- Some residents enjoy walking in Hawick's parks and the surrounding countryside. However, many comments highlight challenges that make walking unpleasant or difficult.

Safety concerns

- Traffic congestion, speeding vehicles and narrow roads are safety concerns for pedestrians, especially children and older people.
- A lack of dropped kerbs and uneven pavements make walking difficult for wheelchair users.
- Poor street lighting stops some residents from walking at night.

Environmental issues

- Dog fouling and litter on pavements are turn-offs for many walkers.
- Road and pavement repairs due to flooding have caused congestion and disrupted walking routes.

Infrastructure needs

- More dropped kerbs are needed for wheelchair users.
- Wider pavements would improve accessibility and safety for all.



- More benches for resting during walks were requested by some residents.

Additional observations

- Some residents perceive a lack of safe spaces for walking, particularly with speeding traffic.
- Bus service limitations were mentioned as a barrier to reducing car dependence.

Consultation findings

The following key themes were identified through consultation with Hawick community members

Traffic

- Participants felt that the continued implementation of the flood defences are having a significant impact on Hawick town centre.
- Participants felt the traffic diversions were causing lots of issues and people did not feel informed about the constant changes to the routes they can and cannot access. This is especially true for people who don't use social media. There was a feeling of inefficient warning when the changes are implemented.
- The congestion on Mart Street makes it difficult to cross. Pedestrians rely on drivers to give way as there is only one crossing. Residents have expressed concerns about the Mart Street roundabout, which provides access to Morrison's supermarket and the town centre. This roundabout is also an access route to Trinity Primary School, and residents are advocating for safety improvements, including better pedestrian crossings and measures to alert drivers.

Pavements

- There was some frustration about the duration of the work on the flood defences and the disruption this causes.
- Participants expressed concerns about the mess created by flood defence work. Leftover signage and equipment obstructed pathways and made the town centre unsightly. There were also issues with improper storage, with items often left at the side of the road. During stormy weather, debris was blown about, and some even ended up in the river.
- Participants felt improvements could be made to local pavements including reducing wheelie bins on streets, dog mess, pavement parking, and litter. They reported patchy repairs on many streets, uneven and cracked pavements, drop kerbs not matching up, and lack of gritting in icy conditions.



There shouldn't be so much traffic going through the town centre, there is no need. There are lots of large vehicles.

Hawick looks like a building site. They leave street clutter everywhere; signs and traffic cones are blocking the place up and they get blown away if the weather is bad - it's just dangerous.

Public transport

- Participants felt that public transport was limited.
- Some residents had experienced a shortage of spaces for wheelchairs and buggies, which means waiting for the next bus – sometimes up to an hour.
- Deliveries of wind turbine blades and towers to the new Pines Burn Wind Farm, which began in November 2023, have experienced significant delays due to weather and other incidents. These delays are causing disruptions to public transport, and the project is still ongoing.

Attitudes to walking

- Flood defence work seemed to have an impact on walking locally. Barriers and signs make it difficult to walk in the town centre.
- More benches are needed for older residents to rest when walking around the local area. This is especially apparent in Stirches and other hilly locations.

Local amenities

- Most people were satisfied with the current provision for local amenities but did have to travel further for some purchases and services.

Active Travel Network

- Participants welcomed the creation of a new Active Travel Network as part of the Hawick Flood Protection Scheme. This network includes a shared-use cycle path and footpath, enhancing infrastructure and promoting reduced car usage. However, some participants raised concerns about anti-social behaviour and design issues in certain areas.
- Participants appreciated the wide streets and pavements on Duke Street, which were necessary due to its historical association with the old Mart.



School engagement

Pupils from Trinity and Stirches Primary School shared their views during the Walking Places workshop and on street reviews conducted around their schools. Key issues were:

Traffic

- Pupils at both schools complained that cars drove too fast near their school.
- Pupils at both schools said they sometimes feel unsafe walking to school.

Street cleaning

- Pupils discussed the amount of dog mess on the pavements they use to walk to school.

Parking

- Pupils said they encounter cars parked on the pavements on their way to and from school.
- Pupils complained that cars would park on school crossings, chevrons, and double yellow lines during the school run, which impact their ability to see and cross the road safely.

Attitude to walking

- Pupils said they enjoyed walking as it was good for their physical health, and they get to chat to friends while walking.
- Pupils were also concerned about pollution and the affect cars have on climate change.

Recommendations

The following recommendations have been made based on the findings across all consultation with schools and communities in Hawick.

Improve pedestrian infrastructure and experience

- Repair uneven pavements, potholes, and cracked kerbs.
- Increase the number of dropped kerbs to improve accessibility.
- Facilitate safer crossing points for primary aged children walking to school.
- Widen pavements for wheelchair users.
- Ensure continued investment in well-maintained pavements, proper lighting, and addressing safety concerns associated with the school run.
- Liaise with the Town Team and organisations involved with flood defences to help reduce impact of flood defence work on walking in Hawick.



- Improve pedestrian experience crossing Mart Street and at Mart Street roundabout.

Improvements to traffic management

- Reduce speeding, especially near schools.
- Address pavement parking and enforce regulations.
- Widen pavements for those with mobility issues, including wheelchair users.
- Liaise with Town Team to discuss moving signage that blocks footways while flood defence work is active.
- Liaise with Wind Turbine organisation to mitigate the impact of turbine deliveries on traffic and walking around Hawick.

Improve cleanliness

- Address dog fouling and provide more bins to dispose of dog waste.
- Address littering and determine if additional litter bins are required.

Address safety concerns and provide better rest facilities

- Provide more benches for resting.
- Improve street lighting in poorly lit areas.
- Ensure gritting of footways, especially along key pedestrian routes.
- Liaise with enforcement and police around selfish parking near schools.

Explore ways to improve public transport around Hawick

- Review frequency of public transport to support needs of local community.
- Improve bus frequency. While some individuals are willing to walk into town from the hilltop locations, many prefer taking the bus back, especially when carrying groceries. Reducing the waiting time between buses, particularly during bad weather, would enhance public transportation accessibility.



Next Steps for Walking Places

The Walking Places project's main focuses are based on the findings from the consultation. These focuses are outlined in the table below, known as the Walking Places Action Plan.

For schools:

- Continue participation in the WOW programme to encourage active travel to school
- Expand Living Streets schools programme with other schools located in Hawick
- Facilitate workshops with pupils and their families/carers to raise awareness and develop understanding of active travel
- Collaborate with Scottish Borders Council and local police on initiatives to improve safety around the school during pick-up and drop-off times.

For the local community:

- Advocate for improved walking infrastructure for pedestrians in the town centre and improved/introduced safer options to cross the road near Mart Street roundabout
- Advocate for improved communication about flood defences work and reduction of related clutter
- Advocate for improved public transport services, particularly buses.

For the local authority

- Improve walking infrastructure and cleanliness for pedestrians
- Enforce illegal parking immediately around schools and on routes to school.



Hawick Action Plan Table

Action	How	Who is involved?	Who is responsible?	Timeline
Increase access to WOW across other primary schools located in and around Hawick.	WOW Travel Tracker offered to other schools (Dependent on Living Streets funding)	Living Streets Burnfoot, Drumlanrig St Cuthberts', Wilton Primary School Head Teachers and class teachers.	Living Streets	By December 2024
Investigate the potential for the Early Years setting to participate in the Little Feet programme.	Living Streets Little Feet resource package offered to nursery schools/early years centres (Dependent on Living Streets funding)	Living Streets Early Years Teachers at nurseries associated with local primary schools.	Living Streets	By December 2024
Determine who can take on responsibility for advocating and moving this action plan forward	Distribute action plan and conduct stakeholder mapping to understand makeup of local organisations and where their priorities link to action plan Start process for working group	Local organisations	Living Streets Hawick Community Groups (Stirches and Trinity)	December 2024



Action	How	Who is involved?	Who is responsible?	Timeline
<p>Feed information back to relevant local partners about issues raised during School Street Reviews.</p>	<p>Share findings from School Street Reviews to relevant local partners.</p> <p>Address lack of school signage at Trinity PS.</p> <p>Consider measures to safeguard children on Weensland Road.</p> <p>Address parking issues and consider interventions to reduce speed of traffic at Stirches Primary School.</p>	<p>Living Streets Councillors Scottish Borders Council</p>	<p>Living Streets Councillors Scottish Borders Council</p>	<p>By December 2024</p>
<p>Share information with Scottish Borders Council about safety concerns regarding the congestion at Mart Street and the lack of crossing points.</p>	<p>Distribute WP Hawick Action Plan to partners to illustrate the different concerns and use as a discussion point. Highlight the advice of the Living Streets Technical team as potential solution see appendix.</p>	<p>Hawick Town Team Scottish Borders Council Living Streets Scotland</p>	<p>Hawick Town Team Scottish Borders Council Living Streets Scotland</p>	<p>December 2024</p>



Action	How	Who is involved?	Who is responsible?	Timeline
<p>Share information with Scottish Borders Council about safety concerns regarding the congestion at Mart Street and the lack of crossing points. (cont...)</p>	<p>Highlight the safety concerns about the volume and size of vehicles passing through Mart Street/Hawick town centre.</p> <p>Arrange a meeting with Hawick Town Team to establish a course of action, give responsibility to key partners to action</p>	<p>Hawick Town Team Scottish Borders Council Living Streets Scotland</p>	<p>Hawick Town Team Scottish Borders Council Living Streets Scotland</p>	<p>December 2024</p>
<p>Relay information back to Local Authority about the Flood defence work and perceived lack of communication and the issues with signs etc being left on the Street.</p>	<p>Distribute Hawick action plan to partners.</p> <p>Investigate who is responsible for announcements and find out the current policy to inform residents/public about road closures etc.</p> <p>Raise the issue or dissatisfaction regarding current communication and see dot find appropriate solutions including different ways to disseminate the information</p>	<p>Hawick Town Team Scottish Borders Council Living Streets Scotland Flood Prevention Team</p>	<p>Hawick Town Team Scottish Borders Council Living Streets Scotland</p>	<p>December 2024</p>



Action	How	Who is involved?	Who is responsible?	Timeline
<p>Relay information back to Local Authority about the Flood defence work and perceived lack of communication and the issues with signs etc being left on the Street. (cont..)</p>	<p>Highlight the concerns over leftover signage and other items relating to the flood work not being removed. (See appendix for photographs) Contact Hawick Flood Prevention Team to discuss the issues and enquire about the possibility of organising a street clean of redundant signage/building goods. Advocate for this to become routine practice during the work. Share the results with residents on Flood Defence Facebook page and other accessible outlets.</p> <p>Establish a course of action, give responsibility to key partners to action</p>	<p>Hawick Town Team Scottish Borders Council Living Streets Scotland Flood Prevention Team</p>	<p>Hawick Town Team Scottish Borders Council Living Streets Scotland</p>	<p>December 2024</p>
<p>Promote benefits of Walking, and improvements to Walking infrastructure through local media channels. (cont...)</p>	<p>Build understanding of walking motivations based on survey results and any required, additional primary research Determine what activity should take place based on motivations for Hawick residents (e.g. activity, event, paper resources) and launch with residents</p>	<p>Hawick Town Team Borders Telegraph Living Streets</p>	<p>Living Streets</p>	<p>On-going until March 2025</p>



Action	How	Who is involved?	Who is responsible?	Timeline
<p>Advocate to improve the roundabout at Mart Street provide crossing points, traffic calming and notices to make traffic aware of pedestrians and school children</p>	<p>Distribute Hawick action plan to partners.</p> <p>Suggest hosting a Community Street Review with school and Local Authority to highlight the issues and look at potential improvements including redesign of the roundabout to include dedicated crossing places for pedestrians and signage to alert drivers. Offer on-going support in an advisory capacity if required.</p> <p>Establish a course of action, give responsibility to key partners to action</p>	<p>Scottish Borders Council Living Streets Scotland</p>	<p>Scottish Borders Council</p> <p>Living Streets</p>	<p>December 2024</p>



Action	How	Who is involved?	Who is responsible?	Timeline
<p>Feedback about the condition of the pavements and advocate for improvement.</p>	<p>Distribute Hawick action plan to partners.</p> <p>Conduct stakeholder mapping to understand makeup of local organisations and where their priorities link to the Hawick WP Action Plan.</p> <p>Arrange a face-to-face meeting with SBC to discuss street maintenance issues including condition of the pavements (repairs lack of space and dropped kerbs), cleanliness (litter, dog mess) and gritting. Identify staff responsible to find out more about the current programme of work and if this can be reviewed/ enhanced to address issues identified through project work.</p>	<p>Scottish Borders Council Hawick Town Team Living Streets</p>	<p>Scottish Borders Council Hawick Town Team Living Streets</p>	<p>December 2024</p>



Action	How	Who is involved?	Who is responsible?	Timeline
<p>Feedback about the condition of the pavements and advocate for improvement.</p>	<p>Offer to host a Community Street Review with school, community members (representing a wide range of demographics) and Local Authority to discuss the issues in situ and think about next steps. Use this opportunity to highlight the benefits of benches to rest on and strategically placed dropped kerbs etc.</p> <p>Investigate the current policy on pavement parking and deterrents. Advocate for further measures to ensure safety of pedestrians.</p> <p>Come up with a course of action, give responsibility to key partners to implement.</p>	<p>Scottish Borders Council Hawick Town Team Living Streets</p>	<p>Scottish Borders Council Hawick Town Team Living Streets</p>	<p>December 2024</p>



Action	How	Who is involved?	Who is responsible?	Timeline
<p>Improvements to public transport</p>	<p>Share the WP Hawick Action Plan with relevant partners and provide further context by meeting face to face, if required.</p> <p>Explore concerns about public transport provision further. Find out more about the current service provision (including running times and space allocation and ease of access for buggies and wheelchair users. Discuss findings with service provider. Arrange face-to face meeting.</p> <p>Liaise with the Wind Farm Developers Energiekontor, to share concerns about large-scale deliveries on public transport.</p>	<p>Scottish Borders Council Living Streets Bus Operating Companies (Borders Buses, Telfords etc.)</p>	<p>Scottish Borders Council Living Streets</p>	<p>December 2024</p>



APPENDICES

Improving traffic calming and the introduction of a dedicated crossing points at the Mart Street/Weensland Road roundabout.

Mart Street is a key crossing point for children and community members as it provides access to between the local Morrisons supermarket, Hawick town centre and Trinity Primary School and areas in the east of Hawick. This is a busy and often congested area of the town. Drivers might not be aware that so many pedestrians use the roundabout as a crossing as there is little signage or road markings to indicate this. In the absence of signage and markings, drivers might not change their behaviour accordingly to let children and local community members cross safely here.

Ideally the format of the road should be reconsidered; introducing a T-junction and removing the roundabout completely would be a safer option as they don't tend to suit a walking environment. As this is a major consideration, Living Streets would also suggest that a more formal crossing points on the main arms of the roundabout with road markings and signage be put in place to make it safer for the local community, especially schoolchildren. The crossing points needs to be much more visible; improvements should highlight the school to motorists, signage, raised beds and road markings. Pedestrians need to feel prioritised and safe. Living Streets would also recommend removal of the guardrails. Guardrails are not a suitable deterrent as children can climb them and become trapped on the road itself or at the other side of the road increasing the dangers.

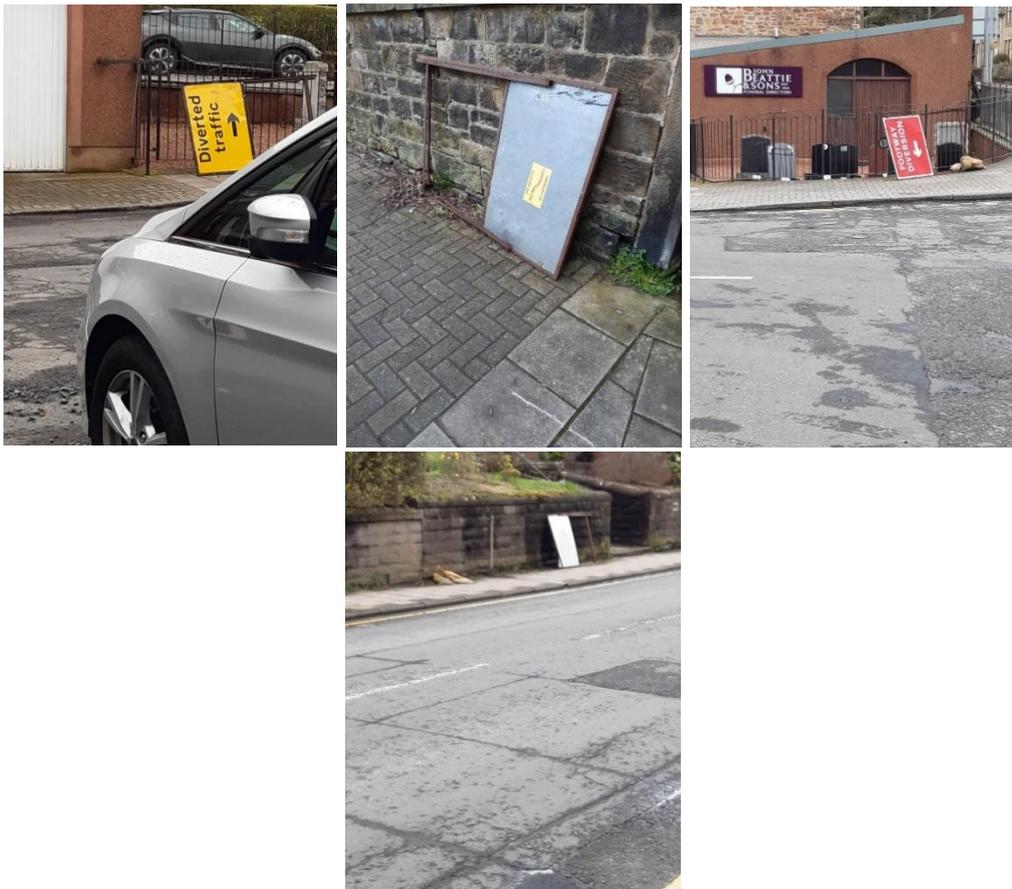


Earl Street/Trinity Street/Arthur Street

The streets surrounding Trinity Primary School are obviously the main access points for the school. They are very wide but prioritise drivers and parking over pedestrians. There is potential to rebalance the streets towards pedestrians, to make the immediate area around the school more walking-friendly, and therefore to encourage more walking. These include:

- Introduction of a School Street (needs further discussion with school to determine what could work – e.g. from Morrisons access on Earl Street and right along Arthur Street to junction with Noble Place)
- Installing a parklet for Trinity Street introduction of greenery, wider pavements and seating
- Continuous footways across side streets on the route to school, to slow down traffic
- Crossing points/road narrowing near side street junctions with larger roads to make it easier to cross and reduce speed of traffic
- Park & Stride from Morrisons car park (in collaboration with Morrisons)

Images of signage left on pavements during flood prevention works





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