



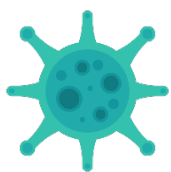
Local Sustainable Transport response to Covid-19: Proposals for RHYL

Covid-19 response proposals for Rhyl town centre

Introduction:

The aim of this document is to explain some of the temporary changes we are proposing to make in order to help Rhyl town centre recover from the impact of the Covid-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. This also includes details of how you can share your views regarding these proposed changes.

Background to the scheme



In March 2020, Welsh Government imposed a number of restrictions across Wales in response to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, including wide-scale closures of retail premises which effectively closed entire town centres. From 22nd June 2020 the Welsh Government allowed many businesses to begin to resume trading, however the threat of Covid-19 hasn't gone away and we understand that this ongoing threat continues to have a negative impact on our communities, especially our town centres.

Many businesses are required to work or operate in a different way in response to Covid-19. One of the biggest changes is the requirement for social distancing, as set out in the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (Wales) Regulations 2020 (as amended). Additionally, there is a requirement from Welsh Government to encourage and promote active travel (such as walking or cycling) as part of the ongoing response to the pandemic.



Understanding local concerns

To understand how businesses and residents/visitors in Denbighshire feel as communities begin to look for a 'new normal' the council launched a survey on 21st June to ask people for their thoughts. To date, over 130 responses have been received from businesses and local residents. Although people generally feel safe in town centres (with 78% of local business respondents and 80%

of local residents saying they were either satisfied or very satisfied with how safe their town centre feels), nearly half of respondents who left a comment expressed concerns

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about the width of pavements and over 60% expressed concerns about social distancing. 80% of residents said they were visiting town centres to carry out essential tasks only, and 65% of businesses said they felt quieter than usual. The survey is ongoing and will track people's opinions over the next few months however these early responses indicate that there is a need to do more to support communities back into their local town centres.

Responding to local concerns

In response to these types of concerns, and also in recognition that more of us have been walking and cycling more through lockdown; the Welsh Government has made a grant available to fund measures that address some of the concerns raised by communities in Denbighshire (and likely elsewhere in Wales) such as the temporary widening of pavements. Denbighshire County Council has been successful in securing funding for introducing such measures in some of our towns including Rhyl

The proposals for Rhyl

We are proposing to create improved shared space for pedestrians and cyclists in key areas of Rhyl between the railway station and the seafront. This will be through the installation of temporary 'Lane Defender' systems in the following locations:

- The eastern side of Bodfor Street and Queen Street
- The northern side of Wellington Road, between Elwy Street and High Street
- Along West Parade, between Water Street and High Street

The proposals will allow us to:

- Widen pavements in areas where they are narrow, to facilitate social distancing
- Create shared space for pedestrians and cyclists
- Encourage and support commuters, residents and tourists to choose active travel (walking or cycling) as their main means of getting around town

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The principle of what are we doing in Rhyl.

Rhyl is one of North Wales' most famous seaside towns and one of the few towns in Denbighshire to benefit from a number of streets already being pedestrianised, which is



the jewel in Rhyl's crown: the beach is popular but not easy to reach on foot or by bike from the town centre

popular with residents, businesses and visitors. The streets which are not pedestrianised have narrow pavements which can make social distancing difficult.

Creating wider, shared spaces will allow people to safely pass each other – especially in areas where people may be likely to queue outside shops or businesses.

We also know that over 400,000 people use the National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 5 along the coast each year, and providing enhanced active travel facilities between NCN Route 5 and the town centre will make it safer for people to access town centre facilities including the public transport interchange hub at Rhyl Railway Station.

How are we doing it?

We will be using Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) to suspend some existing on-street parking provision, and we will be using temporary “lane defender” equipment to make the new widened shared use space for pedestrians and cyclists. This equipment will be bolted down and can be installed quickly, and easily removed in the future.

Monitoring

If the scheme (or a modified version of it) goes ahead, we will be monitoring the impact of the temporary measures in close detail over the next 18 months. This will include using some technology to monitor things like traffic flows, speeds, pedestrian flows and air pollution. We will also be collecting feedback from the community of Rhyl and reviewing this on a regular basis to monitor how residents, businesses and visitors feel about the ongoing impact of the temporary measures.

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How to get in touch

To view and comment on the proposals for Rhyl and some of the county's other towns, please visit:

<https://countyconversation.denbighshire.gov.uk>

What happens next?

Once we have considered the feedback we receive, we will discuss this with the Rhyl County Councillors and make a final decision on whether to proceed with the scheme.