



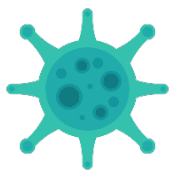
Local Sustainable Transport response to Covid-19: Proposals for LLANGOLLEN

Covid-19 response proposals for Llangollen 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 Llangollen 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

Covid-19 response proposals for Llangollen town centre

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 Llangollen

The proposals for Llangollen

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

- Abbey Road, from the area outside Llangollen Railway Station to the Castle Street bridge
- Castle Street, from Parade Street to Market Street
- Castle Street, approximately 70% of the length from the Market Street junction to the A5 (Berwyn Street)

Additional proposals include:

- The closure of the link road between Hall Street and Berwyn Street (A5)
- Reversing the direction of flow of vehicles on Church 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
- Prevent the use of a key pedestrian route (Bridge Street and Church Street) as a 'rat run'
- Support some pubs, cafes and restaurants on Castle Street and Abbey Road to create outside seating areas for their customers
- Encourage and support commuters, residents and tourists to choose active travel (walking or cycling) as their main means of getting around town

The principle of what are we doing in Llangollen.

Llangollen is an internationally important tourist destination and market town. The town centre experiences a much higher volume of traffic than many other town centres in Denbighshire because it is the meeting point for three important A-roads: the A5 (London to Holyhead), the A542 (Horseshoe Pass) and the A539 (Ruabon). The pavements in Llangollen are narrow and the volume of traffic means that pedestrians and road users can be in almost constant conflict during the high season. With the requirement to ensure that social distancing can be maintained, it is an unacceptable risk to require pedestrians to step into a busy A-road.

Comments received both directly to the council and circulated locally on social media groups have highlighted comments from within the Llangollen community that the existing parking bays cause traffic flow issues as pedestrians and cyclists are forced around the cars and into the road at peak times. We would like to take this opportunity to see if the social distancing measures can actually improve traffic, cyclist and pedestrian flows through the town centre.



The 'new normal' for pubs, restaurants and cafes in Llangollen?

We are also aware that there is an increased emphasis on providing safe and welcoming outdoor spaces for people to spend time. Llangollen has a number of pubs, cafes and restaurants along the route of the proposed changes who may like to provide outside seating for their customers. Where it is

Covid-19 response proposals for Llangollen town centre

practicable to do so, we would like to work with and support these businesses to make these changes.

How are we doing it?

We will be using Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) to suspend the parking bays, 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 Llangollen and reviewing this on a regular basis to monitor how residents, businesses and visitors feel about the ongoing impact of the temporary measures.

How to get in touch

To view and comment on the proposals for Llangollen 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 Llangollen County Councillors and make a final decision on whether to proceed with the scheme.