

## **Weston Central Liveable Neighbourhood – FAQs**

The Liveable Neighbourhood proposed in central Weston-super-Mare will be the first of its kind in North Somerset and aims to reduce through traffic, creating better streets, healthier, more pleasant journeys to school, work and the shops.

These improvements will assist North Somerset residents in reacting to the cost-of-living crisis by helping to provide better and cheaper alternatives to petrol/diesel car journeys through active travel. The reduction in traffic in the liveable neighbourhood will not only reduce air pollution but help people to lead healthier lifestyles and get to school safely.

### **What is a Liveable Neighbourhood?**

A Liveable Neighbourhood is a group of residential streets that are bounded by the kind of main roads that buses, lorries, and non-local traffic should really be on, and discourages or prevents through-traffic.

Residents and local businesses still have full access and can get deliveries, but the ability to drive from one main road to another is reduced but still possible on foot or by bike.

The schemes rely on traffic filters, which can be bollards or planters, for example. The filters are placed at strategic locations inside the neighbourhood so that no useful through-routes remain, and rat-run traffic isn't displaced onto other streets within the neighbourhood.

In Liveable Neighbourhoods, the streets are for locals, not through-traffic.

### **What happens to traffic levels in Liveable Neighbourhoods?**

With through-traffic gone, the streets in Liveable Neighbourhoods see dramatic reductions in motor traffic, and often in traffic speeds too, creating calmer streets and pleasant journeys to school, work, and the shops.

[Liveable Neighbourhoods installed in London in 2020 halved the number of road injuries in those areas compared with areas that did not have these measures introduced.](#)

### **Where does the traffic go?**

The impact of displaced traffic to main roads is likely to be less than the impact of removing through-traffic on residential roads. That's because the rat-running traffic may not be a huge volume. Enough to spoil residential streets, but maybe imperceptible when added to main roads, which are designed to carry high volumes

efficiently. There is also evidence of “traffic evaporation” as people change the way they carry out their shorter journeys.

### **Do Liveable Neighbourhoods help increase levels of health and physical activity?**

A study by Westminster University on London based Liveable Neighbourhoods was carried out over one year, showing that people in Liveable Neighbourhoods were, on average, walking and cycling for 41 minutes a week more than the other areas.

### **How do Liveable Neighbourhoods affect local businesses?**

Liveable Neighbourhoods can lead to higher footfall for businesses and increase trade. [Evidence](#) suggests that schemes enhancing the environment for pedestrians and people on bikes are beneficial to high streets. Improvements to the pedestrian environment have led to average increases in footfall of 32% and retail turnover by 17%.

### **Has some engagement already taken place?**

The engagement process for the Liveable Neighbourhood began in June 2021 and with a blank canvas. Events so far have included:

- Questions in Baker St/Milton Rd consultation June 2021
- Door knocking and leafleting November 2021
- On-street engagement events December 2021
- Business engagement December 2021
- Planning for Real engagement events (co-design workshops) January 2022
- Online consultation July 2022

During on-street engagement events we asked local residents and stakeholders what they saw as the main issues within the liveable neighbourhood area. We captured both positive and negative comments on area maps, using stickers and notes. The main themes emerging from these events were unwanted through traffic, high vehicle speeds, anti-social behaviour and inconsiderate parking.

The Planning for Real engagement events in January 2022 responded to the main neighbourhood issues by co-designing liveable neighbourhood streets with residents and stakeholders. Council officers identified a range of measures and changes suitable to addressing neighbourhood issues. A co-design workshop was held for each of the neighbourhood streets, when residents and stakeholders identified which measures were needed and where they should be built.

### **What is happening about parking?**

A residents parking zone (RPZ) has been in development alongside the Liveable Neighbourhood engagement events. A proposal is also being consulted on for the area at the same time as the Liveable Neighbourhood.