

## Deputation TEC 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2026

Blackford Safe Routes are clear that modal filters are the only sensible option on residential streets. We welcome the officers' report recommendation of Option C – to pass the current trial scheme to TRO Sub-Committee, and to make the current scheme permanent.

Modal filters reduce the risk of death and serious injury by 50%, including for drivers [1]. The safety of people has always been at the heart of Blackford Safe Routes. Two weeks ago, at Merchiston District Community Council, Councillor Jenkinson heard from 4 separate groups on collisions and near misses in the area. Every... single... one... of those groups asked for the same thing – for traffic to be **reduced** in their area. [pause]

The Greenbank to Meadows Quiet Route has achieved exactly that – the council's own report on the Braid Estate states: "The respondents who live on streets which have modal filters are experiencing benefits from the low traffic environment and do not want to lose those benefits". These benefits have included traffic evaporation of 40% and no additional traffic on Morningside Road. This is evidence of the Low Traffic Neighbourhood working exactly as designed and meeting multiple council policy objectives and targets, namely:

- reduction in traffic, road danger, and pollution
- improvements in physical and mental health, equity, and biodiversity

Closer to James Gillespie's Primary School, the modal filter outside the school has enabled children:

- to get to and from school safely
- to cross to the Links during the day for P.E. classes
- to travel independently to and from friends' houses
- to access after school activities
- for parents with younger children to meet, socialise, and use the space to play.

This all builds on community wellbeing, with children gaining vital life skills and parents freed from ferrying their kids.

Further afield, outside the extents of the Quiet Route, the filters have helped to sever longer through-traffic routes. For example, Leamington Tce is now much quieter, as is the former school-run along Canaan Lane.

Removal of the modal filters will result in the loss of safe routes for pupils walking and cycling to many schools in the area. This is supported by the council's own report that young people, including children, will be negatively impacted by the removal of the filters. [2] There is now an entire generation of primary age kids who have never known the space outside the school without the filter. These children are unaware of how dangerous the road could be without the filters.

81% of children walk or cycle to James Gillespie's Primary School [3] and there are 6 primary schools on the Quiet Route, so we are talking about thousands of children losing safe access. We would like to remind the committee of its **legal** responsibilities to protect the rights of the child under the UN Convention. Voting to remove modal filters, is

knowingly putting the interests of motorists ahead of children's right to life. And let's be absolutely clear here, modal filters retain access for cars, so you are trading a child's right to be safe with a minor inconvenience to drivers.

Based on the Council's own report, an additional 6000 vehicles per day [2] could be reintroduced back on to Braid Avenue, with similar numbers on Whitehouse Loan. This would return the school to a situation where at least one school crossing guard would be essential, with the headteacher needing to act as a second crossing guard. This was the situation before the filters. The Council would need to finance a new crossing guard outside the school gate, as currently there isn't one at all!

The Quiet Route has now been in place in its current form for 5 years – 5 years of successfully improving people's lives. Making the filters permanent is the most efficient use of Council officers' and parents' time. There have already been 4 consultations and a lot of Council time and money wasted on alternative designs.

We strongly recommend that the simplest and most efficient way for the council to proceed, is to:

- recognise the scheme has been in place in its current form for 5 years
- to declare the scheme the success that it is
- then approve the scheme to be made permanent before the 15<sup>th</sup> June traffic order expiry.

We call on the council to act in the interests of children and residents.

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For backup, not to be spoken:

[1] Thomas and Aldred study, based on 46 LTNs in 11 London boroughs

[2] Report is from the March 2024 TEC

[3] 2024 school "hands up" survey carried out by the Council's Road Safety team

Possible question responses:

We are parents not politicians, our only interest is the safety of our kids.

You can read what you like into it, we are just asking the council to prioritise children's safety

50% of car journeys are for leisure purposes

Bikes are fastest in the city