

**Report To:** Environment & Regeneration Committee      **Date:** 31 October 2013  
**Report By:** Acting Corporate Director Environment,  
Regeneration & Resources      **Report No:** ERC/ENV/IM/13.171  
**Contact Officer:** Mark Higginbotham      **Contact No:** 01475 714827  
**Subject:** Living Streets

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## 1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee about the work of Living Streets in Scotland and Inverclyde Council's association with their initiatives.

## 2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 There are many policy areas where Living Streets' campaigns and Inverclyde Council's actions and Local Transport Strategy agree. Examples include the Council's long association with Living Streets' Walk to School Week, its prioritisation of walking and cycling modes in all its transport policies, ensuring that footways are wide enough, uncluttered and cleared of snow, and that new development encourages walking trips to local amenities. In terms of Living Streets' most recent campaigns, the Council has maintained its numbers of School Crossing Patroller over the last 5 years, each school in Inverclyde is surrounded by an advisory 20mph zone and Inverclyde Council has responded positively to the recent private members bill to introduce legislation to ban parking on the footway.
- 2.2 In all instances Inverclyde Council are already acting to improve situations that are the subject of Living Streets campaigns or have policies in place to govern the Council's present and future actions towards the same ends.

## 3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Committee is asked to note the content of the report and the correlation between Living Streets' campaign agenda and the Council's Local Transport Strategy and other policies.

**Ian Moffat**  
**Head of Environmental & Commercial Services**

## 4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Living Streets describe themselves on their website as a dedicated group of professionals and volunteers, working together to create living streets around the UK. Living Streets began as the Pedestrians' Association in 1929 in London, as a response to the rise of the motor-car, and the spiralling numbers of pedestrians being killed or seriously hurt on Britain's roads. In 2001 the Pedestrians' Association became Living Streets. They have local groups in Scotland and run the Walk to School and Walk to Work campaigns each year. Living Streets is a registered charity and a registered company limited by guarantee, governed by a board of trustees.
- 4.2 Living Streets run a number of campaigns to improve the street environment for pedestrians. Campaigns are currently being run to encourage individuals to:
- write to their Council to save school crossing patrollers where local authorities are reducing numbers;
  - campaign for 20mph zones; provide templates to write letters to the newspapers and local Councils, sign a petition run by partner organisation Go20 and join or set up a Living Streets local campaign group; and
  - Lobby local Councils to introduce bans on pavement parking and support proposed legislation that would clamp down on irresponsible parking.
- 4.3 Annually in May, Living Streets organises Walk to School Week to encourage active travel and teach primary pupils about the health, safety, environmental and social benefits of walking.
- 4.4 Living Streets Scotland's Walkable Communities project supports communities to improve their local walking environments and encourage more everyday walking. Secondary schools can make use of Free Your Feet, the week-long walking challenge designed by secondary school pupils themselves.
- 4.5 Living Streets also champions cycling, provides advice and information on holding street parties, street play sessions, and responds on behalf of pedestrians to government consultations on such topics as air quality management, national planning framework, works on Scottish roads, cycling action plan for Scotland, drink driving limit, Scottish planning policy, blue badge reform, transport and land use inquiry etc.
- 4.6 Living Streets organises the National Annual Active Travel Conference in partnership with Paths for All, Cycling Scotland and Sustrans Scotland which this year was held at Our Dynamic Earth, Edinburgh on 23 May.
- 4.7 Under the "Professionals" part of its website, Living Streets advocates a number of areas where local authorities are asked to consider improvements to the walking environment:
- De-clutter
    - Where things like guardrail, bollards and badly placed signs aren't necessary, we should get rid of them. If they are needed, they can be moved or combined to free up more of the street for people.
  - Tidy up
    - If a street features piles of litter, broken street furniture, confusing and redundant road markings or uneven surfaces, people won't feel safe and confident to walk there.
  - Recreate the Street
    - Thinking of streets – particularly high streets and similar areas where walking is the natural choice – as places, rather than just corridors for traffic, opens the door to exciting new design approaches like shared space that can help create places that people want to use and are proud of.
  - Rethink the Traffic
    - We should make sure pedestrians have the space they need to travel, and challenge 'one size fits all' solutions such as one way streets and gyratories. Inappropriately fast traffic speeds can be unsafe and intimidating.
  - Safer Neighbourhoods
    - Living Streets is asking councils to give key walking routes the same priority as roads when preparing for bad weather this year.
  - Walking friendly Neighbourhoods
    - Ensuring that our high streets have a range of essential shops and services within

reasonable walking distance helps ensure that people can and want to use their streets to get around their neighbourhood.

## 5.0 INVERCLYDE COUNCIL'S ASSOCIATION WITH LIVING STREETS

5.1 Inverclyde Council has a long association with Living Streets' Walk to School Week. The Council's Road Safety Service has been involved to varying degrees ranging from competitions held in the early years between primary schools to see which school could encourage the most pupils to walk to school, to nowadays where involvement is left to individual schools to decide and the Road Safety Service merely nominate an individual school for a free Walk to School Week Class Pack from Living Streets (this year it was Gourock Primary) and buy the remaining schools the more basic wall chart pack.

5.2 However, schools have stated that the curriculum leaves less and less time for such activities and that the 'one week per year' approach did not result in sustainable modal shift. Some have since independently taken up another Living Streets initiative called Walk once a Week which they report is contributing to a long term change in walking behaviour.

5.3 In terms of Living Streets' suggestions in its "Professionals" web pages;

### De-clutter

The Roads Service ensures that adequate room for pedestrians is always provided when erecting street furniture and giving consent to others to occupy the footway.

### Tidy up

Neighbourhood Services have a programme of cyclic street cleaning, both mechanical and manual, throughout the area with town centres being given particular attention. The Roads Service is in the middle of an exercise to tidy up all its road markings for DPE purposes and reacts to reports of uneven surfaces as a matter of priority for safety's sake.

### Recreate the Street

A number of recent public realm schemes in Greenock have had input from the Roads and Planning Services to ensure the attractiveness and effectiveness of the designs for the walking public.

### Rethink the Traffic

Pedestrian priority is always considered when designing traffic management schemes. For example, Nelson Street's one way working is soon to be removed and complaints about speeding traffic are treated with the utmost importance and speed surveys routinely commissioned to get to the bottom of the problem.

### Safer Neighbourhoods

Busy walking routes in town centres are prioritised alongside the A and B rated carriageways for snow clearing activity.

### Walking friendly Neighbourhoods

The Planning Service is guided by the Local Development Plan and national guidance to ensure sequential tests on retail development are adhered to and town centre brownfield sites are used for new development before out of town locations. Small shops of under 250m<sup>2</sup> are deemed acceptable in any location and the Planning Service also has a policy of protecting existing corner shops within residential areas from changes of use.

5.4 In terms of Living Streets' most recent campaigns;

### *School Crossing Patrollers:*

Inverclyde Council has maintained its numbers of School Crossing Patroller over the last 5 years. Some have been relocated in response to school re-provisioning but none have been lost. The Port Glasgow Joint Campus will replace one Patrol site with a signal controlled pedestrian crossing but the School Crossing Patroller will be redeployed.

### *20mph Zones:*

Each school in Inverclyde is surrounded by an advisory 20mph zone. This excludes special schools where pupils are accompanied at all times when travelling to and from school.

Vehicle activated mandatory part time 20mph signs are located at Notre Dame, St Patrick's, All Saints, Inverclyde Academy, Lady Alice and the Joint Campus, Port Glasgow.

A programme of introducing 20mph zones in residential districts is also well underway with zones already introduced in Bow Farm, Greenock; Woodhall, Port Glasgow; Lomond Road, Wemyss Bay; Pennyfern Road, Greenock; Maukinhill; Branchton; Robert Street Home Zone; Oronsay, Port Glasgow; Leven Road area, Greenock; Spey Road, Inverkip and this year in Bardrainey, Port Glasgow and Midton, Gourrock. Requests for additional 20mph zones are dealt with on the basis of need, justification in terms of speed and accident data and the available funding.

### *Ban on pavement parking:*

Inverclyde Council has responded positively to the private members bill, most recently taken up by Sandra White, the Glasgow list MSP, to introduce new legislation to ban parking on the footway. The Council has recognised for many years that current legislation is difficult for the Police to enforce and would benefit from greater clarity.

## **6.0 LOCAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY**

6.1 Inverclyde Council's Local Transport Strategy (LTS) acknowledges the requirement to make its streets safe, attractive and enjoyable (the mission statement of Living Streets) and has a number of policies in place to do just that and to encourage the active travel modes of walking and cycling.

### 6.2 *Walking*

The LTS has a number of policies concerning walking:

Pwalk1 Promote walking as the priority means of travel for the area.

Pwalk2 Encourage active walking within town centres, and for other appropriate short trips.

Pwalk3 Provide attractive and safe walking routes and address perceived barriers to walking.

Pwalk4 Support schemes that improve safety of the pedestrian network.

Pwalk5 Support schemes that improve the fabric of the pedestrian infrastructure.

Pwalk6 Support schemes that improve the visual quality of the pedestrian network.

Pwalk7 Encourage pedestrian friendly developments.

Pwalk8 Participate in town centre strategies to enhance the pedestrian environment.

Pwalk9 Support the Core Paths Plan.

### 6.3 *Cycling*

The LTS also has a number of policies concerning cycling:

Pc1 Raise awareness of the cycling network and available facilities.

Pc2 Promote benefits of cycling as a healthy, cost effective and environmentally friendly form of transport.

Pc3 Sponsor, promote and work with the cycling organisations, e.g. Sustrans, and cycling events.

Pc4 Continue to develop the cycling network.

Pc5 Maintain the network.

Pc6 Provide appropriate end-of-trip facilities, e.g. cycle parking, changing areas, lockers and showers.

Pc7 Increase awareness of safety issues.

Pc8 Encourage employers to provide cycling links to transport interchanges.

Pc9 Develop an integrated approach to cycling and passenger transport.

Pc10 Adopt a coordinated approach to implementation of related plans and strategies.

Pc11 Use the planning system to improve cycling provision.

## 6.4 *Road Safety and Personal Safety*

The LTS states that;

Schemes such as “20 mph areas” are effective in encouraging drivers to travel at an appropriate speed, especially of the need for reduced speed at or near schools. Vehicle activated speed limit signs help to remind drivers of the necessity to drive at a safe speed and are becoming a major initiative, particularly within the urban area. As the perception of “safety” often influences the choice to walk or cycle, measures must be developed to overcome any possible impediments, suitable maintenance and improvement of the road, footway, cycle network and street lighting are seen as major factors influencing the perception of “safety” by cyclists and pedestrians.

Policy Psafe5 aims to reduce vehicle speeds in appropriate residential and shopping areas.

## 6.5 *Safety in the public realm*

The LTS states that;

Safety in the public realm not only encompasses infrastructure and travel facilities, it also considers public areas in general. Initiatives such as CCTV, high quality street lighting, traffic calming, controlled crossings, traffic signals and/or speed activated warning signs are some of the measures available to address this issue. A further key concern to residents is often the danger from speeding traffic. Speed limits should address this and contribute to perceived safety, however these must be seen as being consistent and appropriate or drivers will tend to ignore them.

Policies which are designed to enhance safety in the public realm are;

Psafe13 Extend safety in the public realm in order to encourage drivers to slow down, especially in urban areas.

Psafe14 Promote an all-encompassing design approach to public spaces to maximise perceived personal safety.

Psafe15 Seek to make driving at or below 20 mph the norm in residential areas.

## **7.0 PLANNING POLICY**

Inverclyde Council uses the Designing Streets policy document from The Scottish Government which advocates the policy of putting ‘place’ before movement and is actively using the document when assessing new developments in the planning/ development control processes.

## **8.0 CONCLUSIONS**

8.1 There are a good many policy areas where Living Streets’ campaigns and Inverclyde Council’s actions and LTS agree. In all instances Inverclyde Council are already acting to improve situations that are the subject of Living Streets campaigns or have policies in place to govern present and future actions towards the same ends.

8.2 Inverclyde Council need not alter its LTS to adequately respond to all Living Streets’ campaigns.

## **9.0 IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 Financial - None

9.2 Human Resources - None

9.3 Equality and Diversity- None

9.4 Repopulation - None