



SHAFTESBURY TOWN COUNCIL

Town Hall, Shaftesbury, Dorset, SP7 8LY

FROM: The Town Clerk, Mrs Claire Commons
DATE: 17th June 2021
SUBJECT: Temporary Pedestrianisation of the High Street

The Temporary Traffic Regulation Order was introduced in June 2020 to enable the High Street to re-open safely as part of the Covid 19 recovery process. The narrow pavements make it impossible to deliver the government guidelines around 2m social distancing therefore the temporary pedestrianisation was introduced purely to facilitate public safety.

As the weeks evolved feedback on the shopping experience, both positive and negative, was received. In August 2020 a shopper survey was undertaken and further feedback was gathered from a survey in May 2021.

Business surveys were also undertaken during 2020 and again in May 2021 with 83% of shop owners/ representatives stating the temporary pedestrianisation was having a positive effect on their business.

Shaftesbury Town Council is not the decision maker on Highways related matters. Representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, Councillors and Dorset Highways and Economic Development officers have been working together over the past year to support the High Street and the recovery process. The group meet online on a fortnightly basis to discuss local feedback; what is working and agree any actions on improvements needed.

Once the government lifts the current social distancing restrictions and step 4 of the roadmap is initiated then the High Street will revert back to traffic which is currently planned for 19th July. Due to the growth of Shaftesbury Town Council's Thursday Street Market during the Pedestrianisation the market would block the street to traffic therefore has submitted an application to Dorset Council to temporarily close the High Street on Thursdays up until 2pm to enable the street market to continue to flourish over the summer period.

A request has been submitted to Dorset Council, fully supported by Shaftesbury Town Council, to look at the feasibility of a more permanent pedestrianisation priority scheme. This scheme, if approved, would need to be managed via an entirely separate project as a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) has clear legislative conditions that need to be considered. TRO consultations, combined with statutory processes can mean a typical TRO can take between 12 and 18 months to deliver as there are

many factors to take into consideration hence why the process can take many months.

Shaftesbury Town Council will continue to seek the view from the public and will keep the community informed as the next steps for a more permanent scheme are developed over the coming weeks and months.

Cllr Piers Brown, the lead member for economic development said – “Temporary Pedestrianisation of the High Street has been a great success, helping our amazing shops through the extremely difficult trading year. With +86% of shoppers and +84% of businesses supporting the Pedestrianisation becoming permanent, I hope Dorset Council will accept our application so the High Street can continue to buck the national trend and flourish”

END

For further information contact Shaftesbury Town Council, Tel: 01747 852420 or email: enquiries@shaftesbury-tc.gov.uk





