

MAKING ROOM FOR PEDESTRIANS

Moniaive Initiative and Living Streets

DECEMBER 2017



We are Living Streets Scotland, part of the UK charity for everyday walking. We want to create a walking nation where people of all generations enjoy the benefits that this simple act brings, on streets fit for walking.



BACKGROUND

Moniaive Initiative has been working with Living Streets Scotland over the past six months through the Lower Speed Communities project. This Scottish Government funded project aims to work with communities where speed has been identified as an issue having a negative effect on community life.

This follows on from the work of both Glencairn Community Council and Moniaive Initiative. Glencairn Community Council has been campaigning over the past five years to have a 20mph speed limit introduced outside the primary school.

Moniaive Initiative was formed in 2013 to deliver legacy projects for Moniaive and the surrounding area of Glencairn, a remote and rural community of nearly 1,000 people. Moniaive is a Conservation Area village in a tourist destination area near the Southern Uplands and Galloway Forest and Dark Skies Park, which is especially popular with walkers and cyclists. The South West Scotland National Byway cycling route passes through the village and it is on the 'Burns Country Run' promoted driving route.

Glencairn is also home to a vibrant community of artists and musicians and plays host to a range of music festivals each year. Moniaive supports a primary school, village grocery store and post office, medical practice, garage and filling station, two pubs, a tea room, a pizza restaurant and a laundrette.

As a membership organisation, Moniaive Initiative is community led and has a strong reputation for community involvement. The board of five Trustees and the two part-time staff are all local residents.

In April 2015, DTAS awarded Moniaive Initiative a grant to investigate the options for High Street Regeneration. An extremely thorough community involvement process was undertaken.

'Accessibility' was a recurrent concern. In an online survey, respondents were asked to name one thing they would like to see improved; both 'pavements' and 'road safety' emerged as local priorities for improvement. In Key Stakeholder interviews, local businesses were asked to prioritise potential actions to improve the High Street; 'Improving parking and pedestrian access' came second only to 'encouraging the use of empty buildings'. For the community wide Questionnaire, the issues of paving, parking and access were separated into more specific potential actions. 'Improving Paving &

Pedestrian Access' came in third place (with 67% of respondents giving it a HIGH priority), above 'Improving Vehicle Through-flow' in fourth place; and 'Improving Parking & Vehicular Access' in fifth place, out of nine potential actions.

At the Community Workshop participants were asked to discuss four potential areas of action around the theme of 'Accessibility':

- Make the High Street more Pedestrian Friendly
- Encourage visitors to use the Car Park
- Create a Village Gateway at the Entrance / Exit
- Introduce a 20mph zone at the centre of the village.

Quotes from local people include:

- 'High Street- requires to be more accessible to disabled and infirm people. Currently very difficult to negotiate for wheelchair users.'
- 'Agree that village Car Park is under-utilised and at expense of 'on street' parking – better footpaths through village and signage pointing to car park would improve its use.'
- 'Trucks often drive too fast and may not be aware it's a school area, thus dangerous.'
- 'Definitely agree with 20mph limit, especially as the pavements are so narrow.'

The issues of traffic, speed of traffic and the difficulties for pedestrians within the village were therefore important for villagers. While local residents appreciate traffic's importance to the local economy, they nonetheless feel the need for action to lessen its impact on village life.

At the end of the consultation, the engagement results were included in Moniaive Initiative's Glencairn & Moniaive Action Plan. The exploration of 'opportunities to improve paving and pedestrian access' was established as one of Moniaive Initiative's Key Priorities to carry forward as part of our push for a sustainable High Street.

Living Streets and Moniaive Initiative agreed to undertake the Lower Speed project as a joint initiative, capitalising on the local knowledge and expertise which Moniaive Initiative brought.

LOWER SPEED COMMUNITIES – TALKING TO LOCAL PEOPLE

Extensive community consultation was undertaken with residents, parents and school children. At the start of the project a meeting was held for residents, representatives of community organisations and business owners where the issues were plotted on a large scale map and key issues identified. These included:

- Speed coming into the village and going round bad bend
- Size of vehicles going through village
- Timber wagons coming through village
- Parking and traffic getting stuck because of parking
- Lack of pavements and dangerous pavements
- Unclear road crossings
- Lack of pavements outside primary school
- Parking problems during festivals
- Conflict at events between pedestrians and vehicles

The following locations were identified as particularly difficult: High Street, Chapel Street, outside the primary school, Dunreggan and Dalmacallan View, Ayr Street and Macara Park and North Street.

The information from this meeting and the mapping exercise was shared on Facebook and at the community Gala, allowing other residents to contribute. Indeed, Facebook was used extensively during the project to allow information sharing, project progress and allowing residents to post comments and views on the issues facing Moniaive. During the August to November period, there were fortnightly updates and posts on various topics. Facebook is a well established means of communication used by Moniaive Initiative and its success can be seen in the data reflecting the reach of

individual posts. This showed that most posts reached at least 200 people, with many reaching over 400. In a community of 1000 this is a major achievement.

Comments on Facebook included:

ADVERTISING PUBLIC MEETING

- ‘Yep, 20mph good. Traffic calming / improved walking areas and more considerate street parking too – latter maybe via residents-only parking eves & weekends. We have an under-used public car park.’
- ‘I definitely agree to a 20mph village. Fingers crossed for this reduced speed limit!’
- ‘I agree to 20mph and would like to see a traffic-calming measure chicane similar to that in Sanquhar.’
- ‘I think this is long overdue. I support 20 is plenty.’

SHOWING THE ‘SCARECROW’ MOVED TO NEW POSITION

‘It’s very effective as a reminder that children will be roadside. As a road it really should be a 20mph limit. All houses open up onto the road as you pass through. Was stunned yesterday when a lorry van accelerated through the village to get ahead of me coming the other way. It was 8.45 and kids and parents getting to school. I was appalled by the lack of care by that driver.’

REQUESTING FEEDBACK ON ‘CHILD BOLLARDS’

‘Something has to be done to make drivers slow down. We cannot wait until someone is knocked down. The amount of traffic racing through the village is horrendous.’

SCARECROW DRESSED AND MOVED FOR HALLOWEEN / BONFIRE NIGHT

‘Was very annoyed that a ‘white van man’ nearly mowed my family down on Dunreggan driving very fast this evening, and then stopped and threatened them after they asked him to slow down. What is wrong with people? they need to slow down in this village especially when there are limited pavements.’

The consultation raised a number of concerns:

- Speed of vehicles entering and travelling through the village
- A lack of gateways and adequate signage to alert drivers to the speed limit and that they were entering a village
- The size of some vehicles on narrow streets leading to pedestrians feeling unsafe
- Lack of pavements or very narrow pavements meaning pedestrians being forced to walk on the road
- A lack of safe crossing points

- On street parking meaning that pedestrian sight and routes were difficult
- Lack of safe routes to school

Overwhelmingly, there was support for the introduction of a 20mph limit within the village. This was seen as contributing to a village where residents and villagers felt safe when walking, would ensure children were able to walk safely on their way to school and when going out to play, and would enhance Moniaive as a positive place to live and to visit.

In addition to information gathering, a scarecrow was dressed as a child in school uniform and moved around various sites on the entry to the village to highlight to drivers that children were present. A children's road safety poster competition was launched at the Moniaive Gala, with many entries urging drivers to slow down; the winning design was used as part of a Facebook campaign. Local residents and local businesses alike are showing support of the campaign by displaying 20mph posters in their windows.

A meeting was also held with the Junior Road Safety Officers at Moniaive Primary School to get children's views on the traffic issues facing the village. The JSROs reiterated concerns about a lack of pavements on Chapel Street, lack of a safe route to school due to traffic, difficulties accessing Macara Park, and a need to slow the speed of traffic.

The JSROs were keen for young people to take an active part in the Lower Speed project and with support from Moniaive Initiative have organised a scarecrow making competition for each class at the school and an individual poster competition. The results of these competitions will be used in future publicity. The competitions have had the effect of getting pupils at the school to consider road safety and traffic speed as it affects their own lives, the actions they can take and the actions others could take to protect them. One group came up with the slogan 'Staying Alive in Moniaive'. This slogan will be used in future publicity.

THE STREET AUDITS

To support the issues raised by residents, and in recognition that on its own a 20mph limit would not resolve all issues raised by residents, a series of street audits took place. Taking its lead from the issues raised in the community consultation, the overall theme for the Street Audit was **Moniaive - Making Room for Pedestrians**.

The overall aims were to:

- Reinforce priority of 'place' throughout Moniaive while managing the need for 'movement'
- Reduce vehicle speeds through the village
- Make streets safer for pedestrians
- Manage parking so it doesn't impinge on pedestrian space

From the Street Audit it is clear that the best approach will be to treat it as a masterplan with an integrated overall approach consisting of several smaller interventions at key sites, supported by the introduction of a 20mph limit.

The sites detailed below were selected following the issues raised in the community consultation and in line with the four aims stated above. For each site a set of potential actions is proposed that will improve the area. It should be noted that these are currently potential actions – wider community consultation is currently underway to ascertain the acceptability of these actions and prioritise them.

SITE 1 - EAST ENTRANCE TO VILLAGE AND PARK



This location has consistently attracted comments from local residents regarding the speed of vehicles, both entering and leaving the village. This area produced the highest average speed readings from the village during council monitoring (2016). Speed is a particular concern here because of the proximity to a nearby park entrance, which also provides an off-road route to and from school. Pedestrians have to cross the road to enter or exit the park as well as when alighting from the bus (the park entrance being an unofficial bus stop). The lack of pavement here forces pedestrians to step out into the line of traffic to see oncoming vehicles before crossing.

Potential Actions:

- Create an obvious, visual gateway that clearly tells drivers they are entering a different space - enhanced 'welcome to Moniaive' signage, lighting, planters etc
- Restrict road width slightly at entrances to reinforce speed restriction
- Make speed limit signs more obvious including markings on road and pre-warning signs (possible installation of 40mph limit ahead of village entrance to slow speeds gradually and make the transition seem less)
- Set gate to park back and install pavement at park entrance to improve safety
- Install zebra crossing opposite park to provide safe access for bus passengers and park users, and to act as an additional speed deterrent
- Trial alternating parking bays on alternate sides of the road along the Dunreggan road section from the village entrance to the bridge to act as traffic calming and allow safe pulling in spaces, but allow for a continuous pedestrian route (albeit with requirement to cross the road at intervals) without needing to walk into centre of road
- Remove white lines throughout village to deter speeding (this will create the effect of the road being narrower for drivers)

- Recognising that most of the village actually functions as shared space anyway, formalise this by providing a different road surface that looks less like a road
- Build out footway on wide sections of road to deter speeding - especially around Medway/Fell View

SITE 2 - BRIDGE AND GEORGE HOTEL TO CRAIGDARROCH ARMS



The 'bottom end' of the High Street is the main access into the village for pedestrians from the Dunreggan end of the village, and for those motorists parking in the village car park. The road narrows to single carriageway with priority signage. Parking bays outside the George Hotel slows traffic entering the one-way section, but also reduces space available for vehicles to pull in to give way to oncoming traffic. This space is often reduced further by illegal parking on the double yellow lines here. Sometimes vehicles pull onto the pavements to pass one another. The pavements themselves are too narrow to allow transit by wheelchairs, buggies, or even an adult walking side-by-side with a child. There are insufficient dropped kerbs, so these users normally share the road space rather than cross backwards and forwards between available pavements.

Potential Actions:

- Improve footway and formalise pedestrian area in front of Dalwhat Garage to provide safe pedestrian route from the car park to the village centre
- Remove 2-3 parking bays in front of George Hotel to allow for installation of proper pavement and help where vehicles are needing to pull in ahead of gateway
- Possible reversal of priority at gateway - make signage clearer
- Extend restricted gateway section right through to the George Hotel to prevent vehicles getting 'trapped' due to limited visibility and having to reverse
- Continue shared use surface through this section

SITE 3 - MARKET CROSS AND BUS STOP



The centre of the village is a busy crossroads with a steady stream of through-traffic. Because of the narrow street, even legally-parked cars (or buses at the bus stop) can cause significant disruption. Badly parked cars outside the village shop often block the route for HGV / agricultural traffic, making it difficult for them to negotiate the junction. Pedestrians feel particularly vulnerable when trying to cross the road here, as larger vehicles sometimes have to ride over the pavements to negotiate the corner.

Potential Action:

- Trial end on/diagonal parking outside shop - assess impact on deliveries and parking spaces
- Remove parking bay directly next to junction at end of Chapel Street to allow build out of area around cherry tree - this will provide increased community area and potentially more seating, etc.
- Build out the cherry tree area, which will lead to a narrower junction mouth at Chapel Street that will help manage vehicle speeds
- North Street - formalise the hatched area at the junction with the High Street as pavement to allow safer pedestrian route at the corner and restrict the width of the junction mouth to reduce vehicle speeds

- Install pavement in front of toilet block and along the wall to stop vehicles parking so close and provide a safer walking route (can be trialled temporarily with paint beforehand)
- Reduce length of pavement where bus shelter is to provide an additional parking bay to replace the one on Chapel Road

PARKING STRATEGY



Parking availability in Moniaive is limited. Vehicles regularly ‘double-park’ in the village centre, even when spaces are available in the car park. Vehicle traffic during the tourist season, or for one of the many events held in the village, often results in illegal parking, blocking of pedestrian routes and disturbance of traffic flow.

Potential Actions:

- Ensure that visitors and residents are primarily directed to the public car park to reduce pressure on the high street - introduce signage indicating ‘parking for village’ clearly at entrance to car park and also at west/north ends of village to direct people through.
- Install signage in the car park directing people to key locations in the village with estimated walking times.
- Provide disabled bays only at doctor’s surgery and encourage community enforcement.
- Manage parking in front of residences to allow for safe pedestrian route along building line where possible.

SCHOOL AUDIT



A separate exercise was carried out with the Junior Road Safety Officers at Moniaive Primary School, focussing on safe routes to school.

The pupils raised the following issues:

- Lack of pavements, especially near school - not safe for younger pupils
- Parked cars along both sides of road - legal but forces children to walk in middle of road and reduces visibility for crossing
- Traffic travelling too fast - the bigger the vehicle, the faster it feels like it's going
- Even if vehicles are travelling at 30mph, it feels faster due to lack of safe area to get out of the road
- Lighting generally very good

- Lack of places to play and socialise - streets feel dangerous and no safe routes to parks
- Children unanimously reported not feeling safe with volume, type and speed of vehicles - it was observed that children from the village are used to the traffic so know how to deal with it (even if it isn't safe) whereas children coming from more rural areas or other villages are not used to it and don't know how to get out of the way
- Pedestrian routes interrupted by vehicles, lack of pavements and steps to houses
- Children generally liked living in and around Moniaive because it was pretty, green, safe and fairly quiet but they reported that traffic noise, especially from the big farm machinery and logging vehicles was unpleasant
- Chapel Road especially busy with vehicles at school times when people are walking home

The pupils then focussed on:

SITE 1: THE INSTITUTE

The school uses this building through the week for PE and other activities. Teachers have to stand in the road to stop the traffic so children can cross safely. Parking outside the Institute makes it difficult to cross safely here, especially when exiting the building. Vehicles entering the village are made aware of the school by signage at the Bridge, but signage for vehicles entering Chapel Street from the other direction is poorly placed, and often goes unnoticed, so drivers have a lack of warning that they are approaching a school.

Potential Actions:

- Install markings to prevent cars parking directly outside the Institute gateway; this



SITE 1 – THE INSTITUTE



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- could be trialled with temporary paint initially
- Road markings (or other non-signage options) to remind drivers of nearby school

SITE 2: SCHOOL AND TURNING PLACE

The private track beside the school, which is used as a drop-off point for the school buses and as a turning place by other vehicles, was identified as dangerous by the children. Several potholes make the cars drive unpredictably to avoid them. Parents park here, and thoughtless parking can block the track and prevent the school bus from getting in or out.

Potential Actions:

- Repave the track to remove potholes
- Introduce 'no waiting' markings at the top end of the track where it meets the road

Children identified the junction between Chapel Road and The Grainnes as being particularly dangerous because parents also use this for turning. Children reported that reversing vehicles felt particularly dangerous here, due to the angle of the road and the limited sightlines (both for pedestrians and vehicles).

SITE 3: BRIDGE ENTRANCE TO VILLAGE

There is an electronic 30mph speed sign, but it has been switched off. Children reported that it wasn't that effective even when it did work because it is small and people don't see it.

Overgrown foliage on the bank is obscuring the 30mph signs and preventing children from being able to climb up the bank to move out of the way of large vehicles.

Children unanimously felt that vehicles speed along this section up to the school. There is also evidence that vehicles drive onto the verges to pass other vehicles, even if children are using them as a refuge.



SITE 3 – BRIDGE ENTRANCE TO THE VILLAGE

Potential Actions:

- Cut back overgrown foliage to provide clear sightlines to existing 30mph signage
- Supplement 'school' signage with additional 'go slow' signage
- Road markings (or other, non-signage options) to remind drivers of nearby school

CONCLUSION

The village of Moniaive has undertaken considerable work through community consultation, mapping, auditing and discussing realistic solutions to the issues facing the village. The issues facing the village are real, and the range of solutions are realistic. Alongside these interventions at specific sites, the village wants to see the introduction of a 20mph limit within the village boundaries. Speeds within the core of the village are already within tolerance for the introduction of a 20mph area.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

A wide-ranging consultation is being held with residents to discuss the results of the Streets Audits. It is intended that this will give residents the opportunity to examine the potential actions and give their views on their acceptability – or otherwise – and the reasons for this. From this, potential actions will be prioritised.

An initial discussion has been held with Dumfries and Galloway Council and with elected members to set out the community consultation, the results of this and the village's desire for the introduction of a 20mph limit.

It has been agreed that Moniaive Initiative will work with Dumfries and Galloway Council to investigate ways of taking forward the issues identified by the community consultation, and the village's prioritised actions. This will include actions the Council can take, and also sourcing external funding from, for example, Sustrans.

In the meantime the village will continue to highlight the need to slow down to drivers, with the children's scarecrows and posters remaining in use until more permanent solutions can be found.



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