

CONTENTS

1. What are 'Streets for People'?
2. How to organise a road closure
3. On the day
4. The bigger picture
5. Application form
6. Letter
7. Risk assessment



• STREETS FOR PEOPLE •

1. What are 'Streets for People'?

Have you ever wanted to host a street party, gather outside with your neighbours or simply wondered what the street space could be used for if there weren't any cars?

You can apply to close the street you live on (or part of it) to traffic for a few hours during the day for people to use differently. People who live there still have access: the closure simply stops non-residents from driving through, so that residents can use their street as a social space.

Here are a few ideas:

- host a street party to mark a historic, cultural or religious celebration
- do something for Car Free Day, Clean Air Day, or any other day
- set up a pop-up garden with movable planters and parasols
- host a 'Big Lunch'
- share and swap: food, plants, clothes...
- get active (exercise class, hula-hooping, dance, yoga...)
- organise music, art or street theatre
- set up a Dr Bike corner to fix those bike niggles
- keep it low-key: put some garden chairs out and leave people to it
- welcome new neighbours

(When this is done specifically for children, it is known as a '**Play Street**'.)

You could:

- do this as a one-off, for a morning, an afternoon or for a whole day
- organise several dates at once, either regular or ad-hoc
- open nearby streets at different times, or at the same time.

Opening street space can have a transformative effect on community spirit and on health and wellbeing. People without gardens can spend time outdoors. Neighbours get to know each other across generations. Those who are isolated have a chance to interact and experience what the street is like as a social space. It's friendly, fun and inspiring.



2. How to organise a temporary road closure

You need to ask the Council for approval to close the street to through-traffic. The good news is it's straightforward, free, and anyone over 18 can apply.

We suggest starting small, to see how things go. If you're in any doubt about how it would work where you live, contact us first to talk it through. *NB – not all streets (those on bus routes for example) will be suitable.*

Allow at least six weeks in total. The more you can plan ahead, the better.

- a couple of weeks or so to consult your neighbours
- at least four weeks for us to deal with your application

Talk to your neighbours

We need to know that everyone who is likely to be affected by the event knows what is happening. **The event should not come as a surprise to anyone.** The more people feel included, the more they'll support you. Communication and common sense are key!

How you go about this is up to you and depends to some extent on how well you already know your neighbours.

Here are some suggestions:

- Informal chats: knock on doors and tell people what you're thinking of doing, and when. Ask them what they think. Taking a child along is a great way to introduce the idea. You may even get some offers of help!
- Drop your neighbours a line with details about your plans.
- Set up a group on social media.
- Hold a meeting.

"I put a slip of paper through all the letterboxes on our street... which meant our neighbours knew what to expect. That took the edge off a bit when I went to talk to them. Speaking to everyone individually really helped... There's someone on our street who sometimes needs urgent healthcare so I was able to reassure her that of course a vehicle would be able to get in if she needed healthcare." Sarah Priestley, Leeds.



Objections

You should be able to answer most queries and solve any issues yourself. If someone raises a concern you are unable to resolve together, please refer it to us and we will see what we can do to help. It's rare that we are unable to find a positive solution. If necessary, we may give you permission to hold a shorter 'trial' event, as this often helps to reassure people.

Do a risk assessment

It's your event. You need to think about what could go wrong, and you need a plan about what would happen in those circumstances. We suggest you adapt our template risk assessment. You must not do anything that could cause damage or be dangerous. You need to be able to clear the street quickly should an emergency vehicle need to get in. Use common sense! We do need to know about any issues such as potholes, exposed wires, broken manhole covers and so on; please highlight any such issues on the application.

Apply for permission

Fill in the application form and send this to us at least four weeks before your event.

The form asks for:

- details about the closure
- assurance that you've run a consultation
- assurance that you've done a risk assessment.

Contact us if you have any questions about this.

When the approval comes through, let neighbours know and remind them of the dates.

3. On the day

At the start of the legal closure, place wheelie-bins at each closure point. The number you need will depend on the size of your street and the nature of your event.

Once the street is closed, you can then set up.

Wheelie bins, stickers and the law

Streets for People is a physical closure under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 Section 16 (A). In Leeds, this means that you must use wheelie-bins with official 'Road temporarily closed' stickers for this to come into effect.

We'd like you to use our free 'Cone' and 'Streets for People' stickers as well, but these are optional.

Please arrange to pick your stickers up beforehand – you'll need to contact us first.



Volunteers

A responsible adult must supervise each closure point at all times. Whether this means having someone standing near the wheelie-bins will depend on the nature of the street and the event. It's up to you to decide what is safe and appropriate. It helps if volunteers wear high-viz jackets. Volunteers can explain why the road is closed and assist with safe access to the street if required, but they do not have any legal powers to enforce the closure.

Access

If someone who lives on the street needs access, they should drive at walking pace, escorted by a volunteer, or you may need to clear the street. It depends what the situation is as to the safest approach, and so you should think about how this will work when you're planning the event.

Share your event!

If you're on Twitter, we'd love you to tag us on:



@ConnectingLeeds (Highways and Transportation)

@LeedsCC_CEAQ (Climate Emergency and Air Quality)

Please leave the street clean and tidy: allow time to clear up. Once the closure time is over, move the wheelie-bins off the street.

How did it go?

We'd love to hear back from you about how things went, and so please let us know! We will use your feedback to improve our support and share your experience with others.

4. The bigger picture

Leeds wants to become a 'city where you don't need a car'.

We want travel to be as safe, healthy and pleasant as possible for everyone, so that more people can choose to walk and/or cycle if they are able to do so; this helps to cut carbon emissions, improve air quality and cut congestion. Streets are the main public spaces in cities, and Streets for People are a fantastic opportunity for neighbourhoods to use streets as social spaces. They help people to connect, have fun, stay active and imagine what a city where you don't need a car might be like to live in.

5. Application form



Application form for a temporary road closure

Name of person (and organisation if applicable):

.....

Address:

.....

Phone number: Email:

Details of the road closure.

We need clear written details (roads, house numbers, description etc) and / or you can attach a map with your application form.

Proposed date(s) and times.

You must be specific. If this is to be a regular event, please make this clear.

Have you consulted all your neighbours?

Please tell us what you did. We don't need to see any copies of letters; we just need your assurance that this has happened.

Were there any problems or objections?

If so, what were they, and how have you addressed them? If there are any issues you have not been able to sort out, please get in touch.



Have you done a risk assessment?

We don't need to see this; we just need your assurance that it's been done. Please refer to our template risk assessment.

Are there any highways defects?

Please tell us about things such as potholes, exposed wires or broken manhole covers etc.

Is there anything else that you think we should know about in relation to this application?

I confirm that all the information I provide below is true and complete and that I am at least 18 years of age. I agree that Leeds City Council may distribute to third parties and use publicly any of the information provided within these forms. I have read the conditions here and agree to accept and observe them if my application is successful.

Signed:

Date:

Please email your application to TROteam@leeds.gov.uk

Or post it to:

The Traffic Engineering Manager,
Highways Services,
Civic Hall
Calverley Street
Leeds
LS1 1UR

If you have any queries please email TROteam@leeds.gov.uk



Requirements

Important – please read carefully!

- This order is for the purpose of Streets for People during daylight hours.
- The order will permit you to close a road at no more than weekly intervals for 12 months from the order start date.
- Leeds City Council will consider each application on its merit and cannot guarantee that an order will be made.
- Not all streets will be suitable (those on bus routes, or if complex diversions are needed, for example).
- This is not for the purpose of longer or permanent closures.
- We must receive your application at least four weeks before the date of the first event.
- The road(s) may only be closed on the dates and times specified within the order.
- You must use wheelie-bins with Leeds City Council's official 'Road temporarily closed' stickers.
- We are not liable for any injury, loss or damage arising from the organisation of your session or event.
- Events involving children/dependents must be under adult supervision – you're responsible for yourself and any children/dependents in your care.
- You may have to pay to the council the full costs of: any damage to the highway or street furniture, other loss or damage suffered by it and of any claims made against it as a result of the making of the order and which arise from your negligence or (if you represent an organisation) the negligence of your organisation's members or officers.
- It is not a requirement for you to take out public liability insurance, but you may wish to do so.
- The order may not involve the placement of any structure on the highway during its use.
- No activity requiring any form of license (under the Licensing Act 2003) may be undertaken when this order is in force.
- Residents and businesses are allowed access during the closure period.
- Residents and businesses are allowed to park on the street during the closure. Existing Traffic Regulation orders (double yellow lines, for example), still apply.

Leeds City Council reserves the right to cancel any such order if the closures are not implemented in accordance with these requirements or the activities are not managed in a safe manner.



Dear neighbour,

This is to let you know that we are applying for a Leeds 'Streets for People' temporary road closure order* for our street / part of our street.

This is/are planned for [date, time, details.]

Streets for People is when communities close the road to through-traffic for a few hours so that neighbours can gather, socialise or hold events on the streets outside their own homes. It is supported by Leeds City Council.

I want to reassure you that this will not stop you from having car access to your property. The only real difference is that through-traffic will be diverted, and residents will be asked to drive in and out at walking speed.

We really hope you like the idea, — please do talk to us if you have any questions or concerns. You can also contact Leeds City Council: TROteam@leeds.gov.uk.

Please let us know if you would be able to help with stewarding (being at the ends of the street to watch for cars). Parents and carers will be responsible for their own children's safety and behaviour.

We hope residents of all ages will join us and enjoy having the street free of traffic for this time.

Best wishes,

[insert name and contact details]

* Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 Section 16 (A)

7. Risk assessment



Template risk assessment

Please adapt this as appropriate for your event.

For events involving children, the Playing Out manual (<https://playingout.net>) has more guidance.

Street name:

Date of event(s):

Named organiser(s):

Date of risk assessment:

N.B. This is a draft to be adapted by each street – categories and actions are given as examples. We suggest you talk through the risk assessment with your stewards as part of their briefing. It's also a good idea to review the risk assessment after a few sessions.

| Benefits | Notes/ review/ reflections |
|---|----------------------------|
| <p>To help balance the risk vs benefit, list below what you hope to be the benefits to organising your event.</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>4.</p> <p>5.</p> | |

| Hazard | Risk/s | Actions to reduce risk | Notes/ review/ reflections |
|------------------------------|--|--|----------------------------|
| Moving vehicles and cyclists | <p>Injury to volunteers when setting up/ taking down the road closure, or to residents participating in the event.</p> <p>After the barriers are removed, people don't realise the road closure has finished and go out into the re-opened street.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents and residents to be clearly informed that they are still responsible for their own and any dependents' safety and behaviour • All volunteers to wear high visibility jackets • Volunteers to check the road is clear before installing the road closure • Road closure points to be clearly marked with wheelie-bins with 'road temporarily closed' stickers • Consider installing the road closure point away from turning points where drivers may not be able to see it | |

Continued.....

| Hazard | Risk/s | Actions to reduce risk | Notes/ review/ reflections |
|------------------------------------|--|---|----------------------------|
| Moving vehicles and cyclists | <p>Injury to volunteers when setting up/ taking down the road closure, or to residents participating in the event.</p> <p>After the barriers are removed, people don't realise the road closure has finished and go out into the re-opened street.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Road closure notices and door to door leafleting prior to event to warn neighbours in advance of the road closure • Children and other residents to be asked to stay out of the road until ALL road closure points in place • Volunteers to alert each other and ensure that no one is in the road if a vehicle needs to pass through the road closure, before removing the barrier • Cars passing through the barrier to access their property to be slowly led to a parking spot by a steward • Full steward briefing before start of the event, by event organisers -to cover every point of the risk assessment • Plan how to ensure people know that the session has ended and the street is 'live' to cars again. (It can be a good idea to take children inside their houses) | |
| Children going beyond the barriers | Injury or loss of child. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure parents know that they are responsible for their children during the event • Volunteers/ stewards with mobile phones to stay at the barriers throughout the event. If it is a longer duration session – ensure there are back up adults who can provide cover (toilet breaks etc!) | |
| Parked cars | <p>Damage to cars from scooters etc.</p> <p>Residents not being seen by moving bikes/ cars.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents are given prior warning of the event so they can move their cars if they want to • Ensure parents know that they are responsible for their children during the event • If there are ball games being played, consider suggesting use only of soft balls – not hard leather for example | |
| Passing members of the public | Collision with people taking part in activities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visibility of volunteers in high vis will alert people that there is an event going on – they can ask about it if they wish • Ensure parents know that they are responsible for their children during the event | |

Continued.....

| Hazard | Risk/s | Actions to reduce risk | Notes/ review/ reflections |
|--|--|---|----------------------------|
| Angry drivers | Volunteers or residents being subjected to abuse or injury from drivers trying to get in and out of the street. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior notice of the event is given to residents (including opportunity for any objections to be discussed among neighbours and/ or considered by the council) • Calm, well briefed volunteers who can lead cars in and out at walking pace • Ask residents to be courteous and friendly to any drivers as they pass • If appropriate, contact the police | |
| Rubbish in the road | Unightly/ obstructive. Negative perception of event. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers to clear any rubbish at the start of session • Ask everyone involved to support with clearing up at the end | |
| Rain / heat / ice | People are affected negatively by extreme weather Possibility of slips, trips, collisions increased with ice. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure parents know that they are responsible for their children during the event • If the weather is extreme, organiser and stewards to make a call as to whether the event should go ahead, or certain activities should be discouraged | |
| Covid-19 | Residents at risk or contracting or spreading Coronavirus. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind people of current Govt guidelines and ask them to follow them • Suggest people take a lateral flow test the day before the event • Make hand sanitiser and disinfectant wipes available and encourage everyone to use these | |
| Anything particular about your street? Steep hill / street off busy main road...? | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If appropriate, consider moving the closure points to create a smaller event space – you could consider ‘road ahead closed’ signs to provide a warning to drivers | |
| Are there any Highways issues you need to tell the council about? | Injury caused by issues such as potholes, exposed wires, broken manhole covers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight these on the application form • Seek and follow advice from Leeds City Council; you may need to relocate activities away from hazards | |