

Thornbury High Street

Public Realm COVID-19 response to recovery

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What are you doing in Thornbury High Street?

From Monday 8 June 2020, the High Street between The Close and Castle Court will be closed to all through traffic, effectively pedestrianising the town centre, to allow people to shop safely by staying two metres apart to help control the virus and save lives whilst also supporting businesses.

The changes in Thornbury will initially be implemented under a Temporary Road Closure and will later be followed up by an Experimental Traffic Order which may potentially run for 18 months before being made permanent. We will be monitoring the situation closely and liaising with councillors and business representatives in the town.

2. Why are you implementing these measures?

Our high streets are central to our communities and we need to take bold action now to support local jobs and economies as well as people's mental health and wellbeing as we are all keen to get back to work and, in ways that keep us all safe, be out and about supporting local businesses.

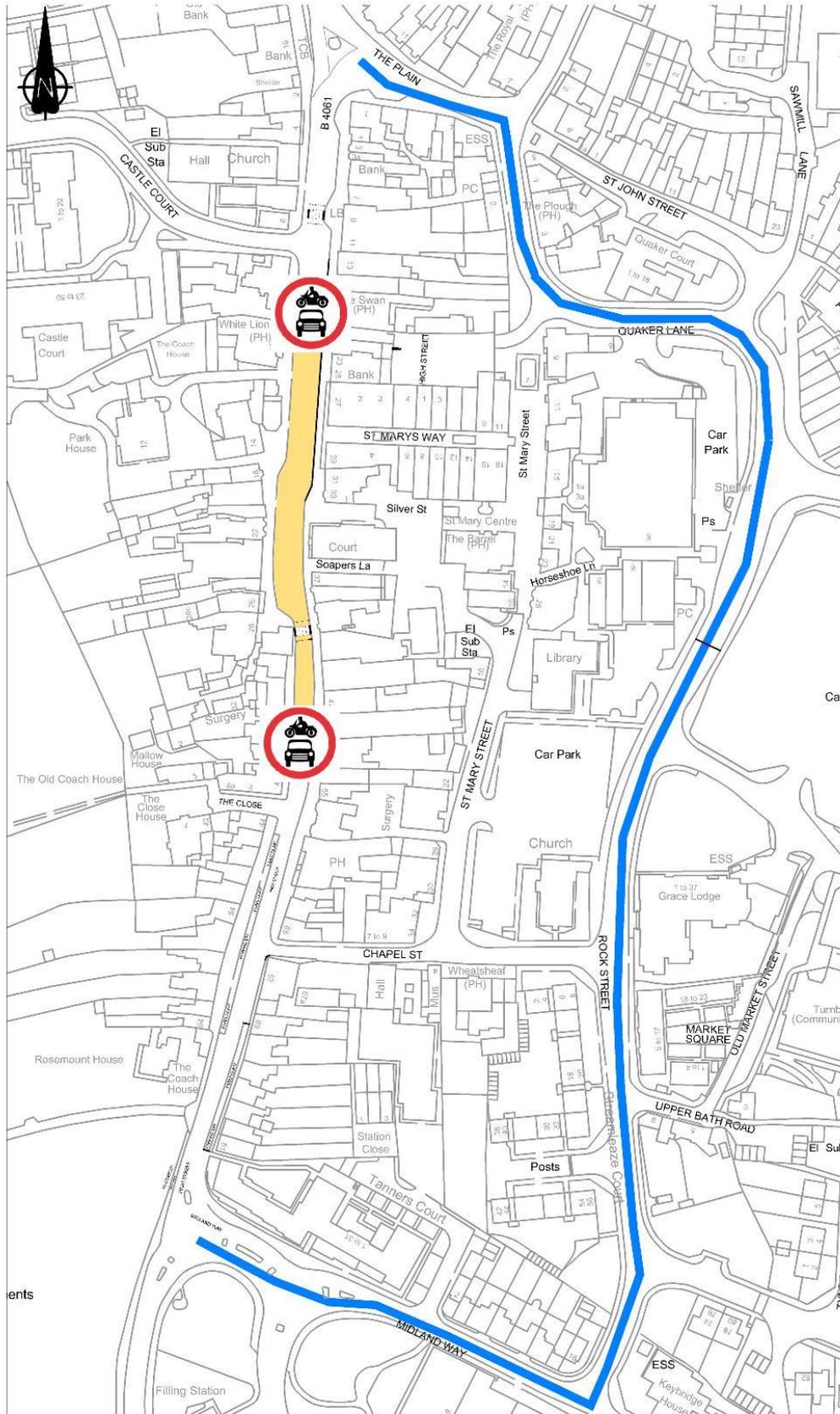
As we look to a near-term future returning to as normal life as possible, while maintaining social distancing to minimise the risk of further spreading the COVID-19 virus, we need to invest significantly in our high streets. We are preparing for the easing of restrictions on non-essential retail throughout June, which is why we are keen to act now. We will work closely with businesses and retailers, so that people can be encouraged back to the high street and be reassured that their safety is being designed into the experience.

Our high streets will look and feel different if they are to thrive in the weeks and months ahead. We will need to allow shops, restaurants and cafes to trade outside immediately in front of their premises. We will need to provide extra space for locals to get around safely and be able to maintain social distancing, whether on foot or by bike.

3. What is the diversion?

Traffic will be diverted via Midland Way, Rock Street, Quaker Lane and on to The Plain.

DIVERSION ROUTE VIA ROCK STREET



4. Won't this put people off coming to Thornbury?

We believe by providing much more space for pedestrians and for people to queue outside shops we will create a safe space for the public to feel confident enough to visit their local high street, use the shops and provide an environment for business to trade safely. This initiative is very much in line with government's emergency response to Coronavirus (Covid-19). The intention of these plans is to help protect our residents against coronavirus and save lives as lockdown restrictions are relaxed and to boost the local economy.

5. Where will people park?

We operate several free car parks in Thornbury, details below, and these will continue to open as normal. We understand concern about parking but we want to make the town centre an attractive and safe environment as we emerge out of lockdown while Covid-19 remains a threat in the community.

Thornbury town centre car parks:

Location	Capacity	Max length of stay
Castle Court, BS35 2BQ	174	12 hours
Rock Street, BS35 2FH	347 + 20 disabled	12 & 2 hours
St Mary Street, BS35 2AB	85 + 6 disabled	2 hours

6. What about disabled parking spaces?

We have installed three disabled parking bays at the decommissioned bus stop at the north end of the closure point (outside the Lloyds Bank).

7. I live in the High Street, where can I park?

Access to drop off will be allowed in the short term. A residents' parking scheme operates in Thornbury under a waiver scheme, email parklegally@southglos.gov.uk for further details.

8. How will my bins be emptied?

Refuse collections will continue as normal and there will not be any changes to collection days or collection points for bins.

9. Do I need to remove my vehicle before the closure is put in place?

All vehicles parked in High Street between The Close and Castle Court will need to be removed on Monday 8 June.

10. Will bus services be affected?

We are working with bus operators and the West of England Combined Authority (the transport authority) to divert affected services and provide bus stops to allow town centre access from Rock Street. Notices will be displayed on bus stops.

11. How long are these measures going to be in place?

The pedestrianisation of Thornbury High Street is a trial initially being installed under a Temporary Road Closure and will later be followed up by an Experimental Traffic Order which may run for 18 months before a decision is made about whether it is made permanent. We will be monitoring the situation closely and liaising with councillors and business representatives in the town.

12. How do I have my say?

From 21 July, under the Experimental Traffic Order, we are running a six-month consultation. Comments must be sent to us in writing after the measures are in place, and should preferably be submitted using the online questionnaire which will be available on the consultation page until 31 January 2021 (although email and letter responses will also be accepted). Plans of the changes and our statement of reasons are available on our consultation webpage www.southglos.gov.uk/thornburyhighstreet Respond to our online survey at www.southglos.gov.uk/thornburysurvey Paper copies of the consultation survey can be picked up from Thornbury Library when open, or requested by telephone by calling 01454 868000 For written submissions by other methods please Quote reference L3/DFA/STOP/PT.6609 email placefeedback@southglos.gov.uk Write to: Head of Legal, Governance and Democratic Services South Gloucestershire Council, PO Box 1953, Bristol, BS37 0DB

13. Who is paying for these measures?

The funding for this work comes from central Government through the West of England Combined Authority (WECA).

14. Have you consulted people before implementing this scheme?

The government has issued statutory guidance which expects local authorities to make significant changes to their road layouts to give more space to cyclists and pedestrians. The guidance also states that 'measures should be taken as swiftly as possible, and in any event within weeks, given the urgent need to change travel habits before the restart takes full effect'.

As a result these changes have been agreed with local councillors and discussed with traders in the town on a trial basis to support businesses to reopen with Covid-19 social distancing measures in place from 15 June. We all need to abide by the Covid-19 guidelines to protect each other, help to control the virus and save lives.

Given these timescales, we have not been able to carry out a full consultation as we normally would expect to for a scheme of this scale before its implementation but we are providing as much information as possible and answering queries as quickly as we can.

Consultation will continue to run throughout the scheme's trial.

15. My business relies on passing trade, how are you going to help?

During the past few months, we have seen a significant shift to online shopping as many people, particularly those who are vulnerable, are very cautious of going out and will remain so for some time. We believe taking this action now to provide a safer

environment in which to shop will help encourage people to use the High Street and benefit the local economy. We are working with all businesses to help support them as we emerge from the lockdown restrictions. Information on how we are supporting businesses during the pandemic is available on our website www.southglos.gov.uk/coronavirus

16. Will you allow access for deliveries?

Access for residents, deliveries and refuse collection will be maintained 24 hours a day until more appropriate time restrictions for a pedestrianised shopping area can be agreed through the Experimental Traffic Order consultation.

17. Will there be access for loading?

We will accommodate the loading of heavy goods in the short term. Security staff will be at each of the closure points to provide access.

18. Are you providing licenses for businesses to trade in the road?

We are working our licensing team to develop a simple scheme for businesses affected.

19. How many more schemes will there be and where?

This scheme is one of many we are delivering to support businesses and allow people to get to work safely as well as improving safety for those who walk and cycle and helping schools to reopen. Further details of other schemes will be announced once they are confirmed.

20. I want to see improvements in my area, how do I suggest a scheme?

We have also adapted our Local Transport Priority List (Assess and Decide) process for considering requests from residents. We welcome any useful suggestions from the public. If there are any interim measures we can introduce to easily help people maintain social distancing we will put these in place as soon as possible. Visit www.southglos.gov.uk/local-transport-priority-list