

Transport and Environment Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 5 December 2019

Citywide Ban on 'A' Boards and Other Temporary On-street Advertising Structures – 12 Month Review

Executive/routine	Executive
Wards	All
Council Commitments	C15, C27

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that Committee:
- 1.1.1 notes the impact that the citywide ban on 'A' Boards and other temporary on-street advertising has had on making the city's streets more accessible and safe;
 - 1.1.2 notes the positive feedback from a variety of stakeholders and members of the public on the difference that the ban has made to how they move around the city, especially those with sight and/or mobility impairments;
 - 1.1.3 notes that the reduction in street clutter has had a positive impact on the appearance of the city, particularly in sensitive historic areas;
 - 1.1.4 notes the challenges that some businesses have experienced since the ban's implementation and agrees that support will continue to be provided in exploring alternative forms of advertising;
 - 1.1.5 agrees that official event-related advertising displayed during the Festival Fringe remains exempt from the ban subject to concerns raised being addressed; and
 - 1.1.6 agrees that the citywide ban should remain in place now that the 12-month review period has concluded.

Paul Lawrence

Executive Director of Place

Contact: Ewan Kennedy, Service Manager – Transport Networks

E-mail: ewan.kennedy@edinburgh.gov.uk | Tel: 0131 469 3575

Citywide Ban on 'A' Boards and Other Temporary On-street Advertising Structures – 12 Month Review

2 Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report sets out findings from the 12-month post-implementation review of the citywide ban on 'A' Boards and other temporary on-street advertising structures. The ban was implemented on 5 November 2018 following its approval at the [Transport and Environment Committee in May 2018](#).
- 2.2 The ban's implementation has prompted positive feedback from a variety of organisations and individuals regarding its impact on the accessibility, safety and appearance of the city's streets. Particularly positive feedback has been received from people with sight and/or mobility impairments, who prior to the ban, found navigating the quantum of on-street advertising a significant challenge and deterrent to using city's streets.
- 2.3 Some businesses and business representative organisations have raised concerns that the ban has had a negative impact on footfall and trade, particularly for premises located in harder to reach/see locations. Support will continue to be offered to businesses to help mitigate these impacts and this report summarises those measures. This report also acknowledges other potential factors which may have contributed to fluctuations in footfall and trade.
- 2.4 This report finally includes a review of feedback provided around official event-related advertising connected with this year's summer Festival Fringe. This responds to a [Coalition Motion](#) approved at the Transport and Environment Committee in September 2019 and will help to inform the advertising strategy for next year's event.

3 Background

- 3.1 The Council is committed to protecting and enhancing the city's environment and economy. A number of the Council's Commitments recognise the positive impact that good quality public spaces have in contributing to the city's success as a place in which people want to live, work and visit. Minimisation of street clutter contributes to the creation of good quality public spaces.

- 3.2 Council Commitment [No. 27](#) specifically seeks the reduction of street clutter to improve accessibility. Stronger and more consistent control of obstructions such as temporary on-street advertising structures will make a significant contribution to meeting this Commitment.
- 3.3 The Council (as Roads Authority) is responsible for overseeing the safe operation of public roads and footways and has a duty to protect the rights of the public to use and enjoy them. Obstructions not covered by the permission of a specific permit or license (or by agreement with the Roads Authority) constitute an offence under Section 59 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984, and the Council has the power to remove them under this legislation.
- 3.4 In March 2017, the Transport and Environment Committee agreed to explore a more strategic approach to addressing the concerns around temporary on-street advertising structures.
- 3.5 Three options were explored as part of the engagement process:
 - 3.5.1 Option 1: Retain the existing policy and amend it to cover all forms of temporary on-street advertising structures rather than just 'A' Boards;
 - 3.5.2 Option 2: Extend the partial ban to other key areas, with restrictions elsewhere; or
 - 3.5.3 Option 3: A complete citywide ban.
- 3.6 The options were assessed against key criteria to establish whether they would:
 - 3.6.1 significantly contribute to improving pedestrian safety and accessibility;
 - 3.6.2 significantly contribute to improving the appearance of the city's streets;
 - 3.6.3 significantly contribute to delivering the relevant Council Commitments, policies, strategies, and guidance;
 - 3.6.4 be clearly understood;
 - 3.6.5 be fair to all businesses; and
 - 3.6.6 be sustainably enforceable, taking account of available resources.
- 3.7 In May 2018, the Transport and Environment Committee concluded that the implementation of a citywide ban would have the most significant impact in tackling on-street advertising. Equality was at the heart of this decision – the primary aim was to ensure that everyone, no matter their age or ability, could enjoy the city's streets and spaces with greater confidence and ease.
- 3.8 As part of the decision to implement a citywide ban, it was agreed that support would be provided to businesses to help mitigate any potential impacts on trade and footfall. This support was to focus on providing both general and bespoke guidance around alternative types of advertising.

4 Main report

4.1 The citywide ban has been in place for just over 12 months since its implementation on 5 November 2018. A variety of feedback and analysis work has been undertaken to review how effective it has been.

4.2 The following information has been used to inform this review:

4.2.1 Feedback from stakeholders including community councils, organisations including the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) and the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB), individual businesses and members of the public;

4.2.2 A comparative review of a selection of streets pre/post implementation, concentrating on some of the streets where high levels of concern were raised around the quantum of on-street advertising; and

4.2.3 Levels of compliance with the ban.

Summary of Feedback on the Citywide Ban

4.3 A range of feedback has been received since the implementation of the ban. Feedback has been provided either through meetings and correspondence with key stakeholder groups and businesses, or unprompted from those wishing to share their thoughts.

4.4 Appendix 1 includes a selection of quotes from stakeholders and the public on the impacts that the ban has had on the pedestrian environment.

Organisations with an Equality Focus

4.5 Organisations with an equality focus including the RNIB, Living Streets and the Edinburgh Access Panel consider that the ban has had a significant positive impact on improving the accessibility and safety of the city's streets for everyone, not just people with disabilities.

4.6 Particularly positive impacts have been experienced by people with sight and/or mobility impairments, who have commented on the difference that the ban has made to their ability to navigate the city more confidently and safely.

4.7 A meeting with the RNIB in April provided an opportunity for members of the Transport and Environment Committee to hear their members' views on the ban. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, particularly around the reduction in trips and falls and the fear associated with navigating obstructions.

4.8 In September the RNIB held a discussion group with some of its members to gain further feedback. Again, members reported a significant improvement to the accessibility of streets following the ban's implementation, reiterating the reduction in the potential for trips and falls and increased confidence in moving through the city. Members also commended the clear communication and enforcement process and were keen to see bans introduced by other local authorities.

- 4.9 Living Streets consider the ban to have successfully reduced street clutter to aid better pedestrian movement and consider that it has been effectively enforced. They also commended the high level of compliance by businesses.
- 4.10 The Edinburgh Access Panel has reported positive feedback from its members and regard the ban as a success. Specific comment was offered around the difference that the ban has made to reducing obstructions on narrower busier pavements in the city centre, which members had found particularly challenging to navigate due to the quantum of on-street advertising.
- 4.11 Guide Dogs for the Blind also confirmed that having less street clutter has made a real difference to reducing the stress experienced by guide dogs as they help people with sight impairments around the city.

Community Councils

- 4.12 Feedback from community councils has been sought on the ban, with a range of responses received from across the city. All those who responded confirmed that the ban has improved the accessibility of streets in their areas.
- 4.13 Prior to the implementation of the ban, Southside Community Council had raised several specific concerns about the proliferation of advertising structures given the narrowness of pavements and high pedestrian footfall in the Southside area. Since the implementation of the ban, they have reported a significant improvement in the accessibility and safety of pavements and regard the ban as a success.
- 4.14 Some community councils referred to the need to ensure premises were complying after noting a small number of businesses that were still presenting structures on pavements. Specific examples were subsequently followed-up by the Council's Environmental Wardens.

Public Safety

- 4.15 The Council's Public Safety Team consider the ban to have been successful in reducing street clutter to the benefit of public safety and event management.

Heritage Organisations

- 4.16 Edinburgh World Heritage considers that the ban has had a positive impact on the appearance of the World Heritage Site through the reduction in street clutter.
- 4.17 The Cockburn Association welcomed the introduction of the ban and considered it necessary to control on-street advertising which had become a major impediment to pedestrians. The continuation of the ban is therefore supported from their perspective. They also consider that robust enforcement is critical to its ongoing success.

Businesses

- 4.18 Feedback from a variety of business representative groups including the FSB, Essential Edinburgh Business Improvement District (BID), the Chamber of Commerce, Edinburgh Tourism Action Group (ETAG) and George Street Association, alongside a number of individual businesses, has been provided.
- 4.19 A meeting was held with FSB and some of its members in July to hear feedback and ascertain whether further guidance was required on any specific issues. Feedback can be summarised as follows:
- 4.19.1 some businesses, particularly those located in harder to reach/see locations (such as those down closes, in basements or off main high streets), have concerns that the loss of advertising structures has caused a reduction in footfall and trade;
 - 4.19.2 the citywide approach could be revised to target only the narrower/busier streets, with a permit system (or similar) being offered to other areas where the use of on-street advertising structures could be applied for and determined on a case-by-case basis; and
 - 4.19.3 support needs to continue to be offered to businesses around exploring alternative ways to advertise premises to ensure visibility is maximised, particularly where attracting passing trade is important.
- 4.20 The Chamber of Commerce reported that there has not been a huge amount of feedback, and on this basis, considered that the ban is unlikely to be a major issue for most members. Some members have however, stated that enforcement needs to be consistent and some have stated that the ban has made it more difficult for them to attract footfall. Some members have also pointed to the positive difference that the ban has made to public accessibility, especially for wheelchair users.
- 4.21 Essential Edinburgh BID confirmed that there has generally been a low level of concern raised around the ban from businesses. Most of the feedback has been around ensuring that enforcement continues to be fair and robust. Specific concerns from one business located in a basement on Hanover Street were reported, therefore direct contact was made with that business. Several shopfront enhancements have since been agreed to help mitigate impacts.
- 4.22 George Street Association reported that members feel that the ban could be less restrictive, and that a mechanism should be explored to allow the use of on-street advertising on a case by case basis. Members also feel that the ban has disproportionately affected smaller businesses who do not have the funds to invest in alternative forms of advertising, and that businesses that do not have an on-street shop front have been impacted most. There was general agreement that consistent enforcement is critical.
- 4.23 ETAG confirmed that they have not received any feedback from businesses or visitors on the ban.

4.24 Discussions with a small number of individual businesses located in more challenging hard to reach/see locations have and will continue to take place to explore bespoke advertising strategies. Where relevant, links with Business Gateway and other organisations such as Edinburgh World Heritage to explore grants for shopfront improvements within the World Heritage Site area, have been established.

Walking Tour Operators

- 4.25 Walking tour businesses faced specific challenges due to their preference to locate the advertising for their tours at the same location as their tour meet-points. Advertising tours using generally large, highly visible box-style structures along the Royal Mile (where most tours meet) had become commonplace.
- 4.26 A commitment to explore bespoke advertising options was made to support walking tour operators and specific engagement both pre and post ban implementation was undertaken. This included meetings with individual operators and a group meeting to discuss issues collectively.
- 4.27 Safety concerns raised by Police Scotland and the Council's Public Safety team prompted the early removal of the box-style advertising structures prior to the 2018 summer Festival. Several interim measures were permitted for use during this busy period and these were reviewed in October 2018 in advance of the ban coming into force. Three options were permitted for ongoing use consisting of a) hand held/wearable signs, b) use of Council poster sites, and c) hire of shop window space. The potential to explore permanent shared signage to advertise tours collectively was also suggested based on feedback from some operators.
- 4.28 In December 2018, a meeting was held with operators and officers representing a range of services including Planning, Roads, Parks and Greenspace, and Events to explore further ideas around alternative forms of advertising collectively. At the meeting, many of the operators acknowledged the challenges faced around the need to balance demands on the Royal Mile in relation to signage, protecting its historic sensitivity and ensuring ease of pedestrian movement. Some operators felt that the use of hand-held signs was an improvement and the removal of the volume of advertising on the street was a positive change. However, many remained concerned that losing on-street signage would be detrimental to their business.
- 4.29 Some operators suggested that having an advertising structure per operator would be the preferred way forward, potentially designed as bollard wrap. However, it was concluded that having a sign per operator could not be supported as:
- 4.29.1 this would have an unacceptable impact on the appearance of one of Edinburgh's most sensitive historic streets;
 - 4.29.2 would not be fair to other businesses who have been required to remove their on-street signs; and

4.29.3 would create a precedent which would be difficult to justify or enforce. Edinburgh World Heritage confirmed that they would not be supportive of this approach due to the cumulative visual impact that numerous individual signs would have on the Royal Mile.

- 4.30 Despite some initial interest at the start of the engagement process and some development of the idea by the Council, the majority of operators confirmed that they did not wish to pursue a permanent shared sign(s). Reasons for this included challenges around management and maintenance.
- 4.31 Operators who have on-street premises particularly on or near to the Royal Mile have been encouraged to maximise advertising opportunities at their premises in addition to the use of hand-held signs.
- 4.32 Some operators have raised issues around the practicalities/safety implications of using hand-held signs. Suggestions to address these concerns include using lightweight wearable tabards or signs on backpacks. To date, hand-held signs have been the most widely used method to advertise tours and this reflects how many other cities manage walking tour advertising including historic cities such as Bath, York and Prague.

Interest from Other Local Authorities

- 4.33 Since the implementation of the ban interest from some other local authorities has been forthcoming, including Birmingham City Council and West Dunbartonshire Council. Edinburgh's approach and the lessons learnt have been shared with these local authorities to support their own efforts to de-clutter streets.

Comparative Review of Key Streets Pre/Post Ban

- 4.34 Streets which experienced some of the greatest challenges with temporary on-street advertising were recorded photographically both before and after the ban was implemented. This record is included at Appendix 2.
- 4.35 The photographs show a marked improvement in the accessibility of the pavements, with people now able to occupy the spaces that the advertising structures once did. This has been experienced across the city and confirmed by the Environmental Wardens on their inspection visits.
- 4.36 The photographs also clearly show the impact that the ban has had on improving the appearance of the city's public realm through the reduction in street clutter. In particularly sensitive historic areas such as the World Heritage Site, the ban has had a positive impact in allowing the special characteristics of the streets, spaces and views through them to be at the forefront of people's experience.

Levels of Compliance

- 4.37 Levels of compliance with the ban continue to be extremely high. An estimated 90% plus of businesses have been voluntarily complying from within the first few weeks of it coming into force.

- 4.38 At the start of the ban's implementation, Environmental Wardens concentrated on working with businesses to ensure awareness of the requirements. Formal enforcement action was then initiated in a small number of cases where compliance was not forthcoming.
- 4.39 Since the ban was implemented, 222 premises have been instructed to remove their structures. Of those 222, 193 complied and 29 premises received a formal notice requiring the removal of the structure. Of those 29, 15 complied and 14 structures required to be confiscated from 8 premises. This stepped process has been successful in ensuring compliance.
- 4.40 Members of the public have also provided valuable inputs into the enforcement process through raising enquiries via the dedicated email address aboards@edinburgh.gov.uk, which was set up to allow breaches to be reported.
- 4.41 The enforcement process is set out in Appendix 3.

Addressing Concerns from Businesses

- 4.42 Some businesses, particularly those in harder to reach/see locations such as down closes, in basements or off main high streets, have raised concerns that the loss of temporary on-street advertising has had a negative impact on footfall and trade.
- 4.43 Whilst reports of negative impacts on footfall and trade are certainly concerning and need to be addressed, there are several potential factors that could have contributed to this in addition to the removal of advertising structures. For example, national reporting over the Christmas period confirmed a significant downturn in spending across the UK compared with previous years. The growing popularity of online shopping is particularly impacting retail-led businesses, especially for those that have either no or limited online presence. Concerns over the outcome of Brexit also continue to impact on spending. These factors confirm that whilst the loss of temporary on-street advertising may have had some impact on trade for some businesses, there are wider factors which need to be acknowledged that are out with the control of the ban.
- 4.44 Support to help mitigate any impacts from the ban will continue to be provided. The Council's [dedicated webpage](#) provides a one-stop-shop of relevant guidance and advice on whether consent for changes to shopfronts will be required, along with links to relevant support organisations.
- 4.45 The Council's [Guidance for Businesses](#) provides clear guidance on different types of shopfront signage and general shopfront alternations.
- 4.46 Links to services offered by Business Gateway including their '[Digital Boost](#)' programme, and the provision of awareness around financial support available such as Edinburgh World Heritage's shopfront improvement grants, will continue to be provided.

- 4.47 Generally, the support offered to businesses in exploring different ways to advertise and promote their premises has been well received. Creative window displays and signs displaying daily offers, for example using blackboard-style signs, have been noted. Clarity has been provided as early as possible where certain types of signage is not acceptable.
- 4.48 To help address concerns from businesses down closes on the Royal Mile, an audit of the existing signs affixed to close walls was undertaken to inform potential options around how signage could be improved to further encourage footfall. The audit confirmed that most businesses do have some form of fixed signage, however there is a wide variety in style and positioning and it is considered that formalisation and consolidation is needed to ensure clarity and better reflect the sensitive historic setting, in collaboration with businesses. The Council is therefore working with Edinburgh World Heritage, who is currently exploring a prototype sign as part of the Twelve Closes project, which could incorporate both directional and business-related information. Opportunities for coordination with the city's wayfinding project, led by Transport for Edinburgh, are also being explored. The next step in this process is to explore potential designs and an update will be provided to the Transport and Environment Committee in due course.
- 4.49 On a broader scale, the city's wayfinding scheme presents an opportunity for key destinations i.e. town and local centres to be highlighted to generate enhanced interest and footfall. Opportunities for businesses to be promoted as part of the digital mapping are being explored and engagement with stakeholders, including business representative organisations, is progressing as the scheme develops.

Alternatives to the Ban – Permit System or Area-Based System

- 4.50 Lessons have been learnt from managing the previous approach of restricting some areas/premises and not others. These lessons confirm that a selective system would not be a workable or effective alternative to the current ban, which is clearly understood, fair to all businesses and wide-reaching in its impact on the pedestrian environment.
- 4.51 Ultimately, both a permit or area-based system would revert the city back to a position where advertising structures have the potential to cause obstructions to pedestrians.

Advertising for the Summer Festival Fringe

- 4.52 The Festival Fringe is an exceptional period in the city's events calendar, where Edinburgh is temporarily transformed to support the huge variety of activities and events taking place. An exemption to the ban is in place during this period to enable official event-related advertising to be displayed. The ban remains in place for all other types of temporary on-street advertising.

- 4.53 Following a competitive tender process in March 2019, Out of Hand Ltd remained the preferred company for designing, delivering and maintaining all outdoor event-related advertising for the Festival Fringe. The contract covers the next four years including 12 monthly reviews, with an optional three-year extension once the four-year period has concluded.
- 4.54 The Council also works in partnership with Edinburgh Fringe, who organises the various shows and events and specifically manages activities on the Royal Mile.
- 4.55 Prior to having a managed advertising strategy, unauthorised flyposting had been a significant problem both in terms of its impact on the city’s appearance and on the Council’s resources. Having a managed advertising strategy has resulted in a significant reduction in flyposting, and any flyposting which does appear is now removed as part of the contract with Out of Hand Ltd.
- 4.56 This summer’s Festival Fringe was another huge success, drawing in thousands of visitors from across the globe and generating millions of pounds into the city’s economy. However, it also prompted several concerns about the impact of advertising structures on pedestrian accessibility and safety.
- 4.57 At the end of each festival a review is undertaken to ensure any issues raised are assessed and used to inform the following year’s event. As part of this year’s review with Out of Hand Ltd, the concerns raised around on-street advertising structures were discussed and a series of changes suggested. These suggestions were informed by a street audit undertaken by Council officers during the festival.
- 4.58 The following table summarises the key elements of the review. The list is not exhaustive at this stage, as work is ongoing to further refine the strategy for next year:

Key concerns raised	Recommendations from Council’s street audit and agreed with Out of Hand Ltd	Example
Position and size of some advertising structures negatively impacted on pedestrian accessibility and safety, causing obstructions (physical and sight-lines), pinch points and trip hazards	<u>Mills Barriers (aka ‘Crowd Barriers’)</u> Significantly reduce the number of mills barriers to ensure they do not cause obstructions to pedestrians, especially at junctions and in the busiest areas	
	<u>Tall Two-sided Lamppost/Pole Wraps</u> Redesign slim version to fit tighter around lampposts/poles in high footfall, narrow streets	

	<p><u>Short Three-sided Triangle Lamppost Wraps</u></p> <p>Restrict to large lampposts only</p>	
	<p><u>Railing Boards</u></p> <p>Review locations to ensure road user sightlines are not impeded</p>	
	<p><u>Heras Fencing</u></p> <p>Review locations to ensure road user sightlines are not impeded</p>	
	<p><u>'A' Boards</u></p> <p>Not permitted for use in any location</p>	
	<p><u>Box Signs</u></p> <p>Restrict to areas where pavement widths allow only</p>	
<p>Flyposting appearing on vacant shop units</p>	<p>Out of Hand Ltd to review opportunities to use vacant shop units as official advertising spaces so that this can be managed</p>	

4.59 Some alternative advertising options are being explored with Out of Hand Ltd which would make use of existing street furniture. Subject to careful design, these alternatives should avoid causing obstructions to pedestrian movement.

4.60 If Committee is minded to remove the exemption to the ban, this would revert the city back to tackling the significant quantum of unauthorised flyposting. This would have a detrimental impact on the Council's resources particularly within the street cleansing, roads and environmental warden teams. It would also have a negative impact on the city's appearance at a time when it becomes a world stage for visitors.

- 4.61 It is therefore recommended that the exemption to the ban remains in place to allow official event-related advertising to be displayed subject to the restriction of certain types of advertising, as detailed in the table above.

Holistic Approach to Minimising Street Clutter

- 4.62 Minimising street clutter requires a holistic approach across all Council services and progress continues to be made in delivering improvements across the city. However, a balanced approach is also needed where some pieces of infrastructure are required to ensure safety, provide a service or information, or direct movement.
- 4.63 The [Edinburgh Design Guidance](#) and associated technical factsheets reflect the Council's commitment to minimising street clutter, and guide services involved in street management and design towards consistent approaches across the city. The '[Minimising Street Clutter](#)' factsheet is particularly relevant and tackles signage, road markings, surface materials and street furniture including bollards, planters, cycle racks, lighting and bins, setting out ways in which items can be consolidated, reduced or removed. It should be noted that most of the actions in connection with this guidance will be incremental as funding becomes available.
- 4.64 In September, the Finalised Strategy for the City Centre Transformation (CCT) project received Full Council approval to move forward to the delivery stage. The strategy sets out a 10-year delivery plan aimed at transforming many of the city centre's spaces and connections. Decluttering will be an important element of this project as it progresses.
- 4.65 Continuing to link into projects managed by partner organisations, such as the Edinburgh World Heritage 'Twelve Closes' project, is also critical to ensuring that interventions deliver enhanced pedestrian environments. In addition, continuing to work closely with representative groups such as BIDs to create attractive pedestrian environments within which businesses can thrive is also key.

Conclusions

- 4.66 The primary aim behind the citywide ban was to improve pedestrian accessibility and safety for everyone. Equality was at the heart of this decision. The ban has achieved this aim.
- 4.67 The feedback from stakeholders including those with an equality focus, community groups, public safety experts, heritage organisations and some members of the public confirm that the ban has been a success. The ban has also had a positive impact on the city's appearance through the reduction in visual clutter.
- 4.68 Despite some concerns around the ban's impact on footfall and trade, most businesses have adapted well, with alternatives being implemented across the city. Support will continue to be offered to businesses who require guidance on alternative ways to advertise.
- 4.69 Levels of voluntary compliance with the ban have been high and enforcement, both through ensuring awareness and dealing with persistent offenders, continues to be successfully undertaken.

- 4.70 Having regard to the above conclusions, it is recommended that the ban remains in place now that the 12-month review period has concluded.

5 Next Steps

- 5.1 Support for businesses will continue to be offered as required, and written guidance will be monitored and updated as necessary to reflect the most effective and helpful advice available.

6 Financial impact

- 6.1 To support the implementation of the ban a budget of £100,000 was approved to meet the costs of at least two dedicated enforcement officers, a comprehensive communications campaign, and costs associated with vehicles/storage for enforcement purposes.
- 6.2 However, the level of voluntary compliance with the ban from businesses has remained so high that this was reviewed, and the budget subsequently reduced to £25,000 to cover costs associated with the communications campaign and vehicle/storage costs only.

7 Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 The impact of the ban on stakeholders and communities has been summarised in Section 4.

8 Background reading/external references

- 8.1 [‘A’ Boards and other Temporary on-street Advertising – Committee Report May 2018](#)
- 8.2 [‘A’ Boards - Committee Report March 2017](#)
- 8.3 [Dedicated ‘A’ Boards Ban website with support for businesses](#)

9 Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1 – Selection of feedback from stakeholders on the ban’s impact on the pedestrian environment
- 9.2 Appendix 2 – Pre/Post-Ban Photographs - Key Streets
- 9.3 Appendix 3 – Enforcement Process

Positive feedback about the ban's impact on the pedestrian environment has been received from across the city:

We've had a lot of verbal feedback with people in passing and unprompted bringing up how much easier it is to get around Edinburgh.

One campaigner said: 'I am very pleased that the council have banned A-boards. There is only one on Newington Road which is actually a sign so it has made my life a lot easier walking about the city, especially in the winter when it's dark at night'.

And another campaigner with no sight said that the ban has meant he has 'not tripped over any of these boards of late'.

This fits in with what we've heard verbally, that the ban has resulted in less injuries for blind and partially sighted people when they're getting about and that it makes negotiating Edinburgh streets less stressful and more enjoyable.'

RNIB

'I've contacted our members and all who have replied have been very positive about the benefits of the ban. As you may know, Morningside has some quite narrow pavements and the removal of A-boards has made it much easier to get around.'

Morningside Community Council

The ban has my support as the majority of city streets were not designed for A Boards and street cafes, etc. and did nothing but create obstacles for getting around. Advertising material can be placed above head height and cause less obstruction.

Firrhill Community Council

I have to say it's been brilliant and has seen such an improvement in Tollcross. We were moved a few years ago after seeing a video online with a guy in a wheelchair saying Tollcross was the worse place to try and navigate around all the obstacles and the video showed him trying to get around the streets with various A-Boards, bins, pavements adverts, pots and plants etc. So have the stretch of Lothian Rd around the Toy shop and restaurants finally being free of all the A-boards as well as other place is great – so much easier for use and those with mobility issues to navigate the town.

Tollcross Community Council

'Please accept my thanks for your work to improve life for pedestrians — especially those with visual or physical disabilities.'

Galerie Mirages, 46 Raeburn Place

We are extremely supportive of this ban for the obvious reasons...on street use must be accessible for all not just those with no visual or other impairment.'

Currie Community Council

'Living Streets Edinburgh has been very pleased to see the impact of the ban. We have been impressed (and slightly surprised!) by how well it has been applied and would give credit both to the council enforcement officers (who we've found to be very responsive to complaints) and indeed to Edinburgh businesses. Although there seem to be a few persistent offenders, they are very few and far between and we think that the ban has greatly improved many 'town centre streets' for example in Dalry and Tollcross.'

Living Streets

The Access Panel's feedback about the A-board ban is very positive. In the words of one of our blind members, "The removal of A-boards has made a massive difference to getting about the streets of the city much more safely and less stressfully." Inevitably there are still some contraventions but these seem to be very few and far between. And it's good to see that the Council have set up an email address for reporting them. In summary, we are delighted with the ban and regard it as a big success!'

Edinburgh Access Panel

'We would like to thank you for making the A board ban happen, and happen so well. Compliance seems to be very high. This must reflect a good process, carried out thoroughly. It must also indicate it was the right thing to do, that most people agreed with the decision (or at least understood it), and that the time was right. Many people have commented to me on the great improvement, some almost ecstatic in their relief!'

Southside Community Council



Many Thanks To Edinburgh Council!

Every day I go out & about, I benefit from your decision to clear the pavements of advertising board clutter...

Anon, received from CEC website via Customer Care

The Cockburn welcomed the introduction of the ban on footpath signage and "A-Boards" which had become not only a serious nuisance but a major impediment to pedestrians. This is especially so in parts of the Old Town and along major thoroughfares such as South Bridge, Princes Street, etc. The continuation with the ban is therefore to be supported and welcomed.

The Cockburn Association

Pre/Post-Ban
Photographs

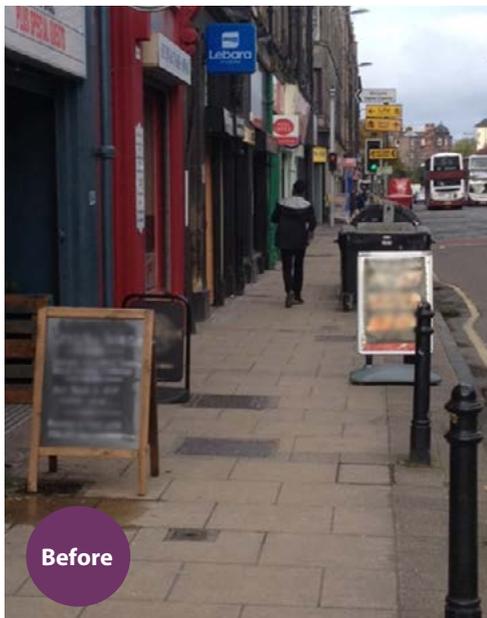


Before



After

Portobello High Street



Before

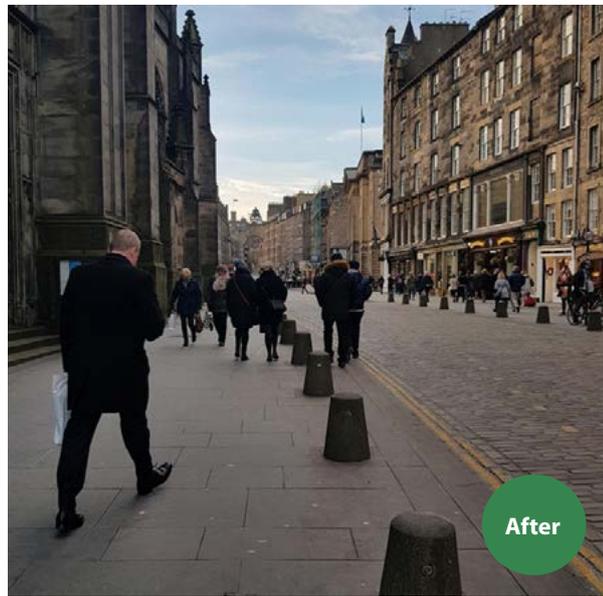


After

Great Junction Street



Before

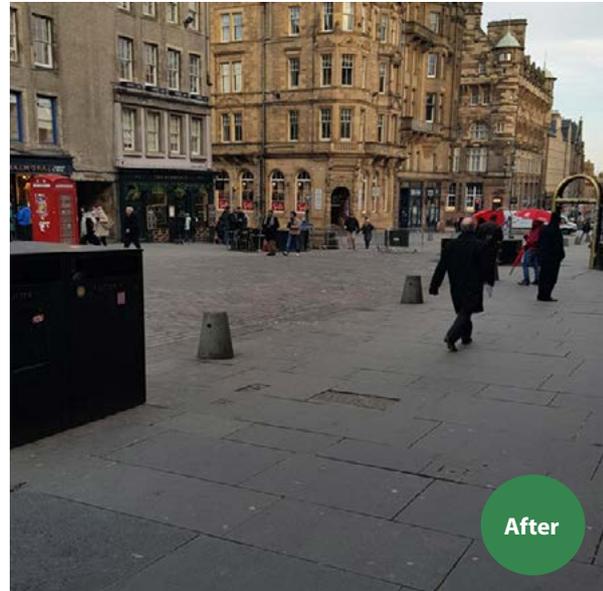


After

High Street (Royal Mile)



Before

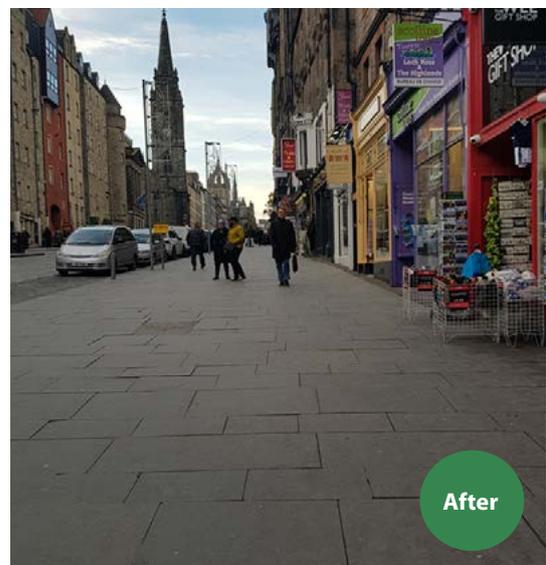


After

High Street (Royal Mile)

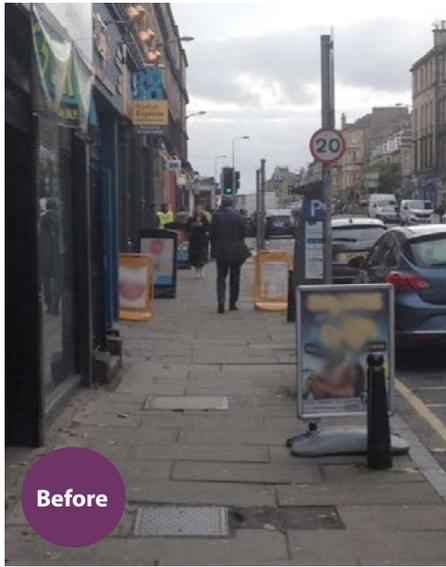


Before

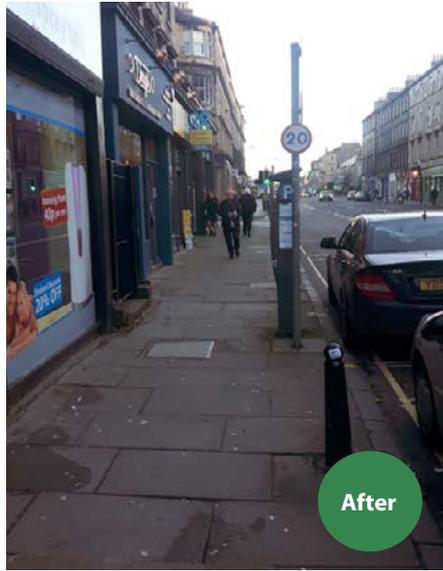


After

High Street (Royal Mile)



Before

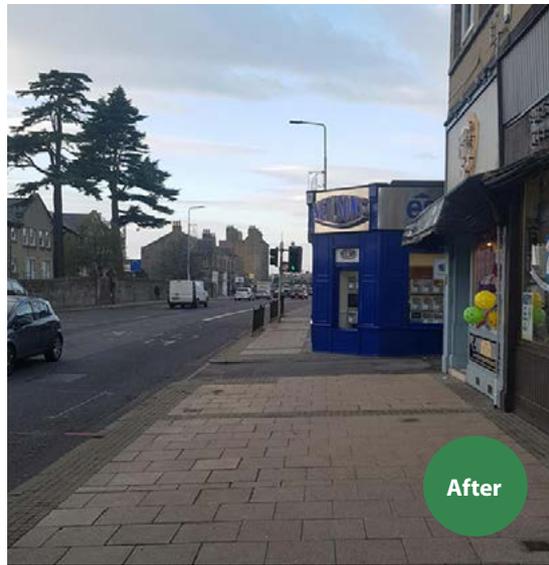


After

South Clerk Street



Before

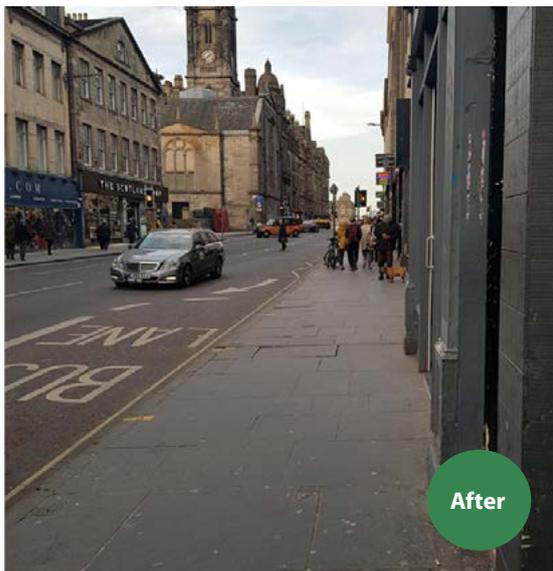


After

St John's Road



Before



After

South Bridge

APPENDIX 3 – ENFORCEMENT PROCESS

