

# Frequently Asked Questions

*The Levenshulme and Burnage Active Neighbourhood Trial*

## What is an Active neighbourhood?

An active neighbourhood describes an approach that creates low traffic, low speed routes within residential neighbourhoods. The aim is to remove traffic that is ‘rat-running’ through communities and to make short journeys attractive by other means rather than the car. We want to make residential streets safer for all users, especially pedestrians, cyclists and school children, and encourage people to consider alternative options for short distance journeys where they can.

People will still be able to drive to and from their front doors, businesses or any key location in the area in the car but they may have to adjust their usual route.

## What is a modal filter?

A modal filter is a physical measure that prevents vehicles passing but allows pedestrians and cyclists through. Modal filters can be designed in many different ways from a simple row of bollards to more complex designs including seating, planting and play equipment to help enhance the neighbourhood for residents and encourage active travel. For the purpose of the trial, they will be wooden planters and signage with some road markings.

## What is meant by the “trial” of the Active neighbourhood?

The trial of the Levenshulme Active Neighbourhood design will involve the installation of temporary modal filters across the scheme area starting in December 2020 and continuing for up to 6 months while the impact of the trial is evaluated through feedback and monitoring. This will allow us (for a relatively low cost) to ‘test’ the design to see how it works in ‘real life’ and it also allows us to make changes to the design if required. The public can comment on the interventions during the 6 month trial, and where appropriate adjustments can be made.

The trial will be undertaken using an experimental traffic regulation order which means that we can make changes following your feedback and monitor the impact for 6 months before the Council decides if the filters will be implemented on a permanent basis. All feedback from residents and monitoring of traffic, pedestrian and cycling levels as well as air quality levels will be considered before a permanent design is agreed and permanent construction money is applied for from Transport for Greater Manchester.

A trial is also crucial to understand how people’s habits change. It’s very difficult to predict exactly how ‘rat-runners’ will reroute, and the trial period will allow us to undertake monitoring, traffic counts and design reviews, but more importantly it gives the scheme chance to settle down and for peoples habits to change.

The trial will also include a number of temporary crossing points and traffic calming measures we want your feedback on. We can install these measures to provide immediate benefits on routes that have been raised through consultation. The locations detailed on the trial maps are where we have had the most feedback, but if opinion dictates, these could be redeployed at other suitable locations.

## What will the modal filters look like in the Active neighbourhood trial?

At the very first stage of the trial we will use temporary traffic management to form the filters. This will allow us to make small changes in filters if needed before the main trial filters are installed. The trial modal filters will be large wooden planters with either trees or plants in them, these will be placed on the carriageway at strategic locations to prevent rat running. This design is simple and adaptable allowing the filters to be used in many different locations and road widths. Please have a look at the trial map



If the trial is successful and the permanent scheme is taken forwards, a permanent design for each modal filter will be produced. These will in the majority of cases have some form of tree pit and kerb changes to replace the planters.

## Why do we need a modal filters?

The roads and routes we have considered in the design process for the project would benefit most from modal filters. There isn’t enough room for installing separated cycle lanes through the area, and generally making streets one way can actually increase vehicle speeds in some cases. Modal filters reduce vehicle numbers and speeds, and provide an environment that’s cleaner and safer for all.

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In Greater Manchester 30% of trips under 1km are done by car. This is because we make travel by car the easiest method, with the most direct routes and parking a priority. We accept that people will take shortcuts in cars at speed through our streets, and google maps often provides these alternative routes through unsuitable neighbourhoods as they are possible on paper.

In response to the postal survey and Commonplace online map survey, 70% of responses highlighted traffic speed or volume or rat running as issues. Some of the most vulnerable people in the community suffer the most from the negative impacts of the traffic and the design for the Active neighbourhood trial aims to reduce those impacts.

## After the trial will the final proposals be exactly the same as the trial designs?

During and after the trial, we will collate all the responses received and produce a report detailing the results of the trial. If any changes to the design have been made or are required these will be detailed in the report. In the months after the end of the trial the interventions will either be removed, changed or made permanent depending on the support for the permanent scheme and funding agreement with TfGM. We want to work with residents to help develop the final design proposals so they fit into your neighbourhood and provide maximum positive benefits and minimal disruption.

## How will emergency services be affected by modal filters?

The emergency services are integral to the development of the proposed road changes. The ambulance service, police and fire service have the opportunity to feed into the design to ensure essential access can be maintained.

## What if there is an issue during the trial? Who do I contact?

During the trial you can contact the Manchester City Council Project team using the MCC website link to commonplace, or in the case of an emergency by phoning the council switch-board.