

SURVEY OF 'GREEN MAN' WAITING TIMES AND 'GREEN MAN' PHASE LENGTHS

Living Streets Edinburgh Group (LSEG) has for years been concerned about the long waiting times at many pedestrian crossings across the city, as this can discourage 'everyday walking' – and can be a road safety risk. This concern has come into stronger perspective with (i) the new National Transport Strategy's 'Sustainable Travel Hierarchy' which makes pedestrians and other pavements users the top priority on our streets, and (ii) the need for Covid-19 social distancing and the associated 'Spaces for People' programme. Many of the most crowded pavements are those at signalled crossing points, where pedestrians gather, waiting to cross. A commitment to explore enhanced pedestrian priority at pedestrian crossings was made in the initial 'Spaces for People' report of 14 May, but we have seen no further mention of this in reports since.

LSEG volunteers have undertaken surveys of 10 pedestrian crossings at signalled traffic intersections and 13 'mid-block' pedestrian crossings at various locations in north and south Edinburgh. The results in the two tables on pages 3-6 illustrate:

- an enormous variation in **maximum Green Man (GM) waiting times at signalled traffic intersections** (from c. 25 seconds to c. 285 seconds) – even allowing for possible crossing mechanism faults, the variation suggests significant inconsistencies and failings in relation to (a) meeting pedestrian demand / footfall, (b) road traffic v. pedestrian volumes, and (c) the need for social distancing at waiting points on narrow pavements;
- an enormous variation in **maximum Green Man (GM) waiting times at mid-block crossings** (from c. 15 seconds to c. 95 seconds, excluding one outlier which may reflect a crossing mechanism fault) – the variation suggests significant inconsistencies and failings in relation to (a) meeting pedestrian demand / footfall, (b) road traffic v. pedestrian volumes, (c) the need for social distancing at waiting points on narrow pavements, and (d) the previously understood Department for Transport guideline that mid-block crossings should not involve a wait longer than 30 seconds (for safety reasons);
- as regards the **length of the GM phase at signalled traffic intersections**, this was consistently only c. 6-8 seconds, which is an exceedingly short period for less mobile people to cross the road – and does not appear to reflect the varying widths of carriageway to be crossed;
- as regards the **length of the GM phase at mid-block crossings**, this was consistently only c. 15-17 seconds (including the flashing GM phase where applicable, and as little as 8 seconds for green man only), which is a very short period for less mobile people to cross the road – and does not appear to reflect the varying widths of carriageway to be crossed.

Our conclusions from this necessarily quick survey are as follows:

1. The pattern of GM waiting times at both signalised traffic intersections and mid-block crossings has presumably evolved over many years, and, perhaps partly as a result, is now highly inconsistent – and in a significant number of cases involves an unreasonable length of waiting time, both in terms of walking convenience and road safety. Some of the busiest footfall crossings have very low volumes of vehicle movements (eg Leith Street), but this is not reflected in the waiting times.
2. It is clear that the GM waiting times as a whole should be thoroughly reviewed and overhauled in the light of the Sustainable Travel Hierarchy and the need for social distancing, and we would expect GM waiting times in general to be substantially reduced. These should also be geared better to the pattern of footfall, eg when school students are out on the streets (before school, after school and at lunch times - for example, the longest wait time at Gilmore Place/Viewforth junction was Friday lunchtime, when pavements were full of Boroughmuir HS children).
3. While the lengths of the GM phase at signalled traffic intersections and at mid-block crossings are generally consistent, they are often too short – and should generally be lengthened (as well as account being taken of the varying widths of road to be crossed).
4. Pedestrian crossing mechanism faults would be less of a problem if these could be detected automatically and quickly rectified.

Living Streets Edinburgh Group / October 2020

[TABLES OVERLEAF]

Location description	Crossing type	Automated ?	Maximum waiting time for GM	Length of GM phase	Date	Time of day	Notes
<i>Crossings at signalled traffic intersections</i>							
Leith Street/Calton Road	Traffic signals	No	c. 285 seconds	not recorded	Saturday 12/9/20	11.00	Needs automating? Very busy but people not pressing button for green man??
Great Junction Street (Foot o' the Walk)	Traffic signals	No	110 seconds	c. 6 seconds	Saturday 14/11/20	12.00	Very busy crossing to Kirkgate
Leith Street/Greenside Row	Traffic signals	No	c. 105 seconds	not recorded	Saturday 12/9/20	11.00	
Howard St (Inverleith Road)	Traffic signals	Yes (?)	c. 100 seconds	c. 6 seconds	Friday 25/9/20	13.00	
EyrePl/RodneySt/Broughton Rd/Canonmills	Traffic signals	Yes	c. 100 seconds	c. 6 seconds	Friday 25/9/20	12.00	
Ferry Road/Granton Road (south side to refuge)	Traffic signals	No	c. 85- 65 seconds	c. 6 seconds	Friday 25/9/20	13.00	No pedestrian crossing across Ferry Rd on western arm
Kerr St/Hamilton Place/Saunders St	Traffic signals	Yes	c. 75 seconds	8 seconds	Sunday 20/9/20	10.00	
Leslie place/Deanhaugh	Traffic signals	Yes	c. 75 seconds	8 seconds	Sunday 20/9/20	10.15	
Gilmore Place/Viewforth	Traffic signals	No	c. 60 seconds	c. 6 seconds	Friday 25/9/20	13.30	Very busy with Boroughmuir/Bruntsfield schoolchildren
Gilmore Place/Viewforth	Traffic signals	No	c. 40 seconds	c. 6 seconds	Monday 21/9/20	16.00	
Gilmore Place/Viewforth	Traffic signals	No	c. 25 seconds	c. 6 seconds	Sunday 20/9/20	15.00	

<i>'Mid-block' pedestrian crossings</i>							
Ferry Road (at Stewarts Melville Rugby ground)	Puffin	No	c. 265-360+ seconds	-	Friday 25/9/21	13.00	timing abandoned after 6 minutes! Fault with crossing??
Raeburn Place (South of Raeburn Street)	Temporary signal (SGN works)	No	c. 78 seconds	8 seconds	Sunday 20/9/20	10.30	
Morningside Road, south of Morningside	Pelican	No	c. 50 seconds	c. 15 seconds (including flashing GM phase)	Wednesday 16/09/20	12.45	
Morningside Road, south of Falcon Avenue junction	Pelican	No	variable – c. 40 seconds to c. 95 seconds!	c. 15 seconds (including flashing GM phase)	Wednesday 16/09/20	13.00	
Morningside Road, south of Springvalley Gardens junction	Pelican	No	c. 40 seconds	c. 15 seconds (including flashing GM phase)	Wednesday 16/09/20	13.00	
Comiston Road, at South Morningside Primary	Pelican	No	c. 40 seconds	c. 17 seconds (including flashing GM phase)	Sunday 27/09/20	12.30	
Comiston Road, north of Comiston Gardens junction	Pelican	No	variable – c. 30 seconds to c. 50 seconds	c. 17 seconds (including flashing GM phase)	Sunday 27/09/20	12.30	
Bruntsfield Place, north of Bruntsfield Gardens junction	Pelican	No	c. 30 seconds	c. 15 seconds (including flashing GM phase)	Wednesday 16/09/20	11.15	

Bruntsfield Place, north of Whitehouse Loan junction	Puffin	No	c. 25 seconds	c. 15 seconds	Wednesday 16/09/20	11.00	
Bruntsfield Place, south of Leamington Terrace	Puffin	No	c. 25 seconds	c. 15 seconds	Wednesday 16/09/20	11.15	
3 Bellevue Terrace PI (E)	Puffin	No	c. 20 seconds	not recorded	Friday 25/9/20	12.00	
Mansfield PI (E)	Puffin	No	c. 20 seconds	not recorded	Friday 25/9/20	12.00	No audio working
Mary's Place (Raeburn Place)	Puffin	Yes	c. 13 seconds	c. 8 seconds	Sunday 20/9/20	10.30	