

HIGHWAYS AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE – 21ST JANUARY 2020

PETITION

Text of a petition containing 78 signatures presented by Julia Sang

Petition Overview:

There is a national movement of residents closing their streets to through-traffic, for short periods, so children can play out safely. At the last count, 63 councils had a play street policy and almost 1,000 street communities – 30,000 children – had “played out” - all led by residents. But in Cambridgeshire there have been less than a handful of Playing Out events.

Why do we want to Play Out?

We want to create more connected communities and safer streets. And we want to encourage children to have healthier lifestyles with physical play and make small steps to independence.

The Minister of State for Transport, the Children's Commissioner for England and British Cycling, all support this work. Recently the Minister of State for Transport sent an [official letter to all English Highway Authorities](#) saying, "play streets offer wonderful opportunities not merely for children, but for families and communities."

Playing Out fits with so many of the County Council's own strategies including the Community Resilience Strategy; Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Strategy for Children and Young People and Think Communities Strategy.

What is stopping Cambridgeshire residents from organising Playing Out events?

The application form for the Highways Department is discouraging residents from applying for temporary road closures for Playing Out events and Street Parties. Other councils such as [Adur and Worthing council](#) and the [London Borough of Brent](#) take a more positive approach to making it easy for residents to apply.

With this spirit in mind, we want the following changes made to the application form so more residents feel confident in applying. These are:

- to remove tick box "I have considered obtaining public liability insurance for the event and understand that if any damage was to occur to the highway during the event all costs would be recovered from the applicant."

Insurance should not be required as any damage is the responsibility of the person(s) who caused it (just as if any member of the public was walking down a street and caused damage)

- to amend the tick box "I am aware of the traffic signs manual chapter 8 guidance and understand the principle and techniques required to install the road closure in line with this guidance document."

This is a 560 page document which covers a huge range of closure situations. We would like it replaced with a short guide relevant to closing quiet residential streets for applicants to read.

- to allow for more a group of people to apply (rather than an individual) in case the person that applies cannot attend the event on the day.

Support our petition to Cambridgeshire County Council to make changes and encourage more resident-led street play events. If you have any questions about it please contact myself via the [Cambridgeshire Playing Out Facebook Group](#).