



Major Capital Programme Team  
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Email: Cranborneavenue@kent.gov.uk  
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Dear Resident

### **Experimental Traffic Regulation Order – Closure of Cranborne Avenue, Maidstone**

We are writing to advise you that following a review of information in relation to traffic movements at the Wheatsheaf junction, before and after the closure of Cranborne Avenue, KCC's Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, Neil Baker, has made the decision that the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order currently in place for Cranborne Avenue, shall be made permanent when it expires on 24 September 2023.

The evidence from traffic surveys proved benefits expected from the trial closure had been realised with improvements to journey times, congestion and traffic queues on the A229 Loose Road and A274 Sutton Road for the circa 35,000 daily trips that are made through the junction.

We are aware of the comments raised by some of the residents during the consultation period about the local impacts of this closure and these have been assessed in making the decision to make the closure permanent. Concerns have primarily been raised about the safety and increase in traffic using Plains Avenue.

Road safety is of paramount importance and was a key factor in making this decision. A review of personal injury crashes at Plains Avenue has shown that there have been zero crashes recorded in the last five years, noting the recent crash that occurred in August 2023 was reported as damage only. An equivalent review of information at the Cranborne Avenue junction during the same period, however, shows that there were three personal injury crashes prior to the closure, including one fatality.

Evidence does suggest a slight increase in vehicles using the Plains Avenue junction which is not unexpected due to its proximity to Cranborne Avenue, however this has not led to additional queues and delays at the junction.

A report on the benefits derived from the closure of Cranborne Avenue, together with a report on the feedback from the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order consultation is available to view on the project webpage at <https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/road-projects/planned-road-projects/keep-maidstone-moving/wheatsheaf-junction>

To conclude this phase of works, measures will be put in place to formalise the closure by replacing the temporary barriers and signing with a permanent layout at the junction.

The next phase of the project will now be finalised to achieve the optimum design for the Wheatsheaf junction and consolidate the benefits derived from the closure.

An update will be provided to residents before any changes are implemented.

Yours faithfully

Major Capital Programme Team  
Kent County Council