



# Using temporary street closures and interventions to help gain support for permanent changes:

## Case studies from Southampton

**Hannah Chivers**

Southampton City Council

**Dr. Alan Wong**

University of Southampton

UNIVERSITY OF  
**Southampton**



# METAMORPHOSIS

## Transforming streets for children/people:

make cities more  
'liveable' & increase  
the demand for  
walking and cycling



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# Outline

- Background and need for change
- The Metamorphosis Project
- Case studies:
  - Sholing child-friendly streets; and associated
  - Community street openings
  - School streets
- Discussion and recommendations

# Background Context

1. Aspiration for Southampton to develop as a more vibrant, sustainable and child-friendly City
2. Encourage a culture of walking and cycling, where this is viewed as the norm
3. Lessons learnt from more 'liveable' and people-oriented cities in Continental Europe, e.g.:
  - Copenhagen
  - Delft
  - Freiburg
  - Vienna...

# Why the Need for Change?

1. Historic focus on cars and growth in car use:
  - severe traffic congestion (and noise) at peak times
  - poor air quality (particularly NOx and PM)
  - main roads exacerbate social isolation & segmentation...
2. Particularly harmful for children:
  - breathing difficulties and reduced lung function/development
  - impacts cardio vascular activity
  - associated morbidity (premature deaths) - COMEAP Report
  - increased safety risks near schools
  - associated with inactivity, greater distance to play areas...
3. Findings from Government (LSTF) and similar studies:
  - difficult to get modal shift away from cars solely using 'nudge' effects
  - hard to justify continued spending based on cycling campaigns alone
  - need to give wider population a reason to cycle/use public space
  - communities require greater ownership/developing sense of place...



## Project Metamorphosis



Photo source: FGM/Bambini



- Metamorphosis aims to transform urban neighbourhoods with a focus on children:  
*“when a neighbourhood has many children on its public spaces, this is an indicator it is well designed as a people-oriented and sustainable neighbourhood” (Jan Gehl, 2013)*
- EU Horizon 2020 Research & Innovation Project
- Aim to deliver improvements in physical and mental health, and the quality of life for all citizens
- Involves 13 partners\*, including 7 cities, 3 SMEs and 3 Universities across Europe
- 7 Work Packages (WPs), with Southampton leading on WP2 (user analysis and involvement)

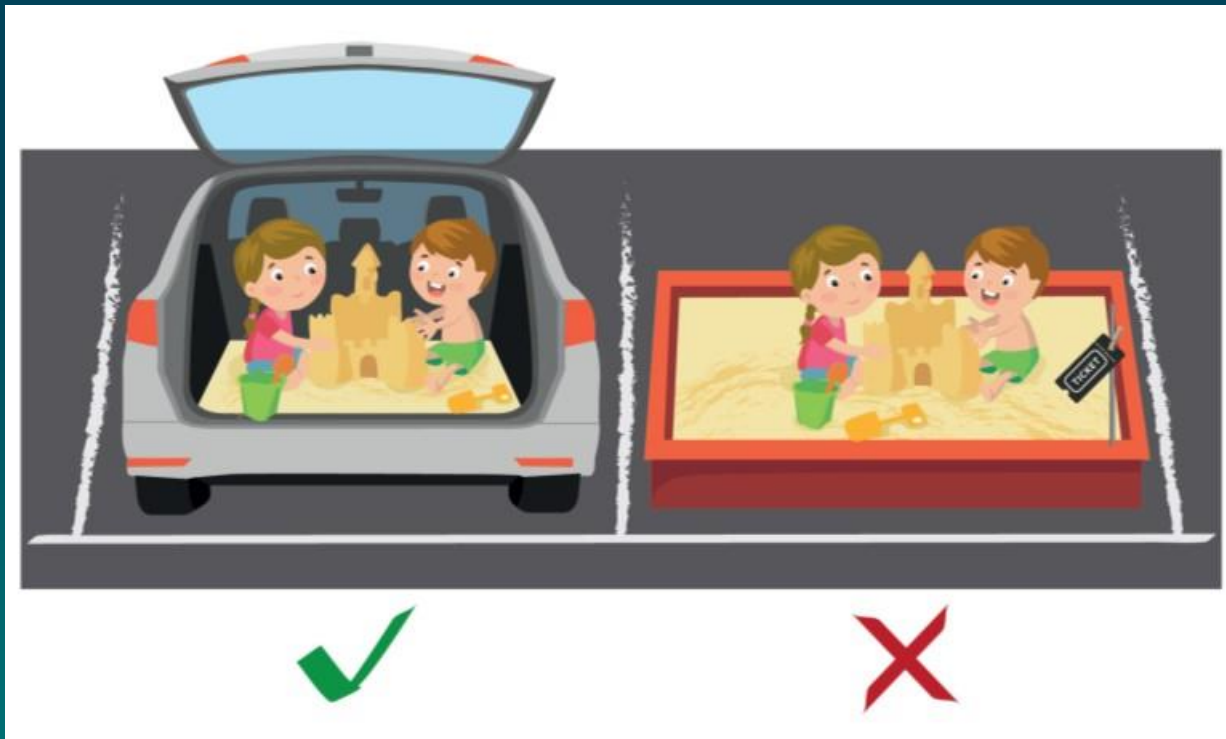
\* City of Zurich is involved in implementation, but is not funded as part of the EU project



# Summary Objectives

To transform from car-oriented to child-friendly neighbourhoods:

- Answer basic research questions related to neighbourhood transformation
- Build a common vision for public space transformations
- Achieve creative innovations for public spaces - in design, and in planning procedures
- Evaluate take-up, involvement, process and impacts, and transfer results





# What is different about Metamorphosis?

## 1. Developing an ethos of child-friendly neighbourhoods:

- *sustainability* implies designed for future generations
  - conducive to walking and cycling, and reducing motor car use
- ‘co-design’ workshops with children, parents and local community
  - changed the tone, and mechanisms of engagement
  - *authenticity* - seek feedback (evaluation), as well as design input

## 2. Children also act as enablers for change:

- they tend to be driven by their hearts, rather than logic
- it is difficult to ignore what children want, as they have a special place in our hearts
- they can change the way we look at ourselves, & our neighbourhoods...



Source: “At eye level 1.20m”, Canton Basel-Stadt

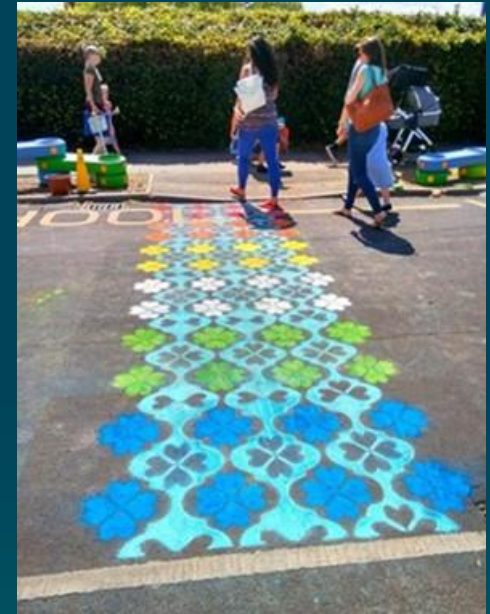


# Interventions/Trials in Southampton

## Street Openings/Closures and School Streets

### *'Child friendly Streets' in Sholing*

- Three Phases:
  - Street 'opening' (closure to cars) for Valentines school - 22 June 2018
  - Transformation of public space - around Monty's Community Hub, 29 Sep 2018
  - Further community street opening/closure - Elgar Road, 12 December 2018
- Making streets and public spaces safer, more fun and accessible to all, and linking communities to local facilities, including infants/primary school and shops, while encouraging active travel and healthier lifestyles



### *'School Streets' in Southampton*

- Timed street closures - 45 minutes before and after the school starts
- Discourage disproportionately short journeys, improve air quality (as parents often waiting in their cars) and reduce the number of accidents near the school entrance



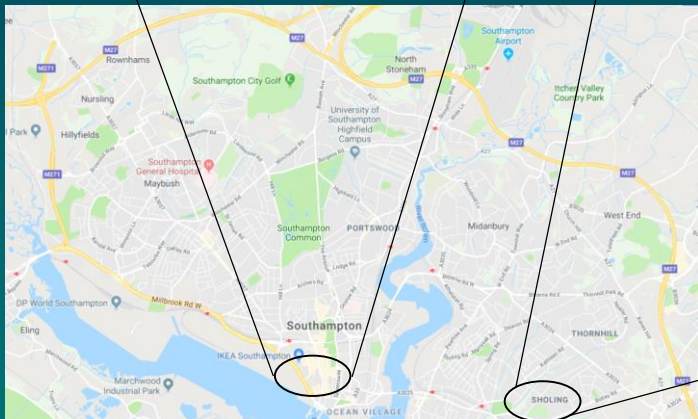
# Location of Street Trials



**St. John's School Street**  
(Nov 2018 – ongoing)



**Sholing Child-friendly Streets**  
(Jun 2018 – Mar 2019)



100m

# The Southampton Case Studies



# Sholing Child-Friendly Streets

## Aim

- Encourage active travel and social interaction
- Engage residents in a participatory design process (“co-design”)
- Trial ideas through workshops and street closures
- Evaluate the impact of new approach



Workshops



Community  
consultation  
and street  
trials



Final  
designs



Delivery of  
permanent  
features



Evaluation

Monitoring

# Sholing Child-Friendly Streets- Approach

## Community Consultation and street trial

- ◆ Temporary “Street Party” closure .
- ◆ Proposed design trialled and voted on
- ◆ Activities run in collaboration with the school and Monty’s
- ◆ Street kit left on site

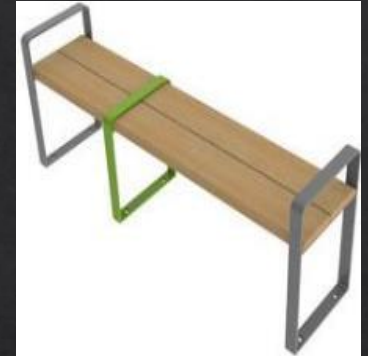




# Sholing Child-Friendly Streets- Impact

## Delivery

- Support for simple permanent interventions installed to encourage walking and cycling
- Thermoplastics
- Planters and seating
- Play equipment



## Impact

- Drop in motor vehicle traffic prior infrastructure changes being installed.
- Increase in walking and cycling
- Positive support from perceptions surveys with residents and parents



# School Streets Closures

## Why?

1. Create a healthier, safer, child friendly environment at school drop off and pick up.
2. Encourage higher levels of social interaction and play
3. Encourage more cautious & courteous driver behaviour & active travel



Credit: Sustrans

“Being a child of the 50s, this is how we played. Days like today are great for children. It was good to tell my granddaughter how it used to be, she was amazed!”

Grandparent @ St Monica's Primary



# School Streets Closures –One Day



One day closures build support for more regular or permanent changes by:

1. Raise awareness
2. Demonstrate the impact
3. Encourage parents to try/test a different school morning routine

- 92% of residents felt the road was a safer place to be.
- 82% agreed it was child friendly
- 72% of parents (who usually drive) agreed it was a more enjoyable place to be.
- 93% would support more regular closures
- >2000 active journeys to and from school

# School Streets Closures –St Johns School



## Post road closure:

- Active Travel has increased to 93%
- Public perception of Air Quality has improved
- Public perception of the attractiveness of the local area has improved
- People report feeling less intimidated by traffic
- 96% support the scheme remaining in place
- 94% thought the scheme was safer for children

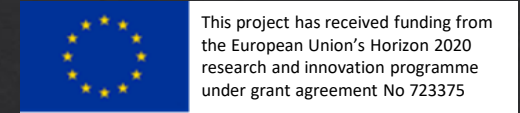


# Discussion and recommendations

Consider

1. How you will monitor the closure and show the impact it has had on different groups ?
2. Have you done enough to enable and encourage people to change their behaviour?
3. What is the earliest point you can start to work collaboratively with residents and communities representatives? How can you make sure you engage with everyone that makes up the local community?
4. How can you support communities to deliver their own road closure?





[www.metamorphosis-project.eu](http://www.metamorphosis-project.eu)

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# Thank you!

- **Hannah Chivers**

Southampton City Council

[hannah.chivers@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:hannah.chivers@southampton.gov.uk)

- **Dr. Alan Wong**

University of Southampton

[a.wong@soton.ac.uk](mailto:a.wong@soton.ac.uk)

