



**To:** Greener Renfrewshire Board

**On:** 23 May 2016

**Report by:**

Stephen Cruickshank, Chair, Renfrewshire Access Panel

**Streets For All: Street Audit For Moss Street, Paisley to Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley**

**1. Summary**

- 1.1 Renfrewshire Access Panel has carried out its first Living Streets Access Audit report that provides comment on the accessibility of pavements and public spaces in Renfrewshire. This report (attached) was carried out on an area of Paisley Town centre from Moss Street to Cotton Street.
- 1.2 In general terms, streets and pavements in Paisley are well maintained and provide a high quality town centre environment for most users. Within this context, however, people with disabilities (and other pedestrians such as parents with young children in prams and buggies) have specific requirements in order for the built environment to be fully accessible to them.
- 1.3 The Living Streets Access Audit assesses the accessibility of the environment, its facilities and any services delivered from it, from the perspective of people with disabilities. As such, it focuses on those accessibility issues that require to be addressed from the perspective of disabled people, rather than providing an assessment of positive features of the built environment. The Living Streets Access Audit provides a starting point for collaborative discussion about practical and sustainable improvements that can be made over a negotiated period of time to increase the accessibility of the built environment for all users.
- 1.4 Key design principles to be considered in further discussions include:
  - Ensuring that public and transport access points to town and village centres promote accessibility for disabled people, including car parking and setting down points.
  - Ensuring that sufficient provision of dropped kerbs in appropriate locations to enable wheelchair users to quickly and safely transfer from transport to paved areas and move freely around town centres.

- Spaces shared by cars and pedestrians are clearly marked to enable visually impaired people to move around in safety.
  - Regulations are in place and enforced to ensure that potential obstacles such as street furniture, waste bins and advertising boards are clearly marked and placed only in positions that do not present a trip hazard to people with disabilities.
  - Paved areas are designed to minimise uneven or raised surfaces and use materials that are conducive to using wheelchairs, prams or buggies safely and comfortably.
- 1.5 Subsequent to the production of the report, Renfrewshire Access Panel has worked with Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) students at the University of the West of Scotland to identify some of the potential solutions to the issues identified in the report.

## **2. Recommendations**

2.1 It is recommended that the Greener Renfrewshire Board:

- (a) Notes the positive work done by the Access Panel to identify accessibility issues along a key route in Paisley Town Centre and the support of students from University of the West of Scotland.
- (b) Agrees that appropriate officers of Renfrewshire Council be contacted to discuss in detail with Renfrewshire Access Panel the findings of the report and the potential solutions suggested by UWS students in order to agree a set of design principles to promote accessibility.

## **3. Background**

- 3.1 The Greener Renfrewshire Board previously agreed on 3 June 2015 a report from Renfrewshire Access Panel/Engage Renfrewshire regarding improving the accessibility of streets, pavements and public spaces in Renfrewshire. It was agreed at this meeting that Renfrewshire Access Panel identify areas on which to carry out a “Living Streets” audit and identify any issues regarding accessibility.
- 3.2 The first Living Streets audit was carried out in October 2015, focused on an area of Paisley Town Centre from Moss Street to Renfrewshire House at Cotton Street. This audit identified a significant number of barriers to accessibility along the route through Paisley Town Centre.

3.3 The access audit is a means of:

- Examining the accessibility of services and facilities
- Identifying where physical barriers may compromise access to services by assessing the feature against predetermined criteria
- Measuring the “usability” of facilities within a building and the services being delivered in it.

3.4 The report was discussed at the meeting of Renfrewshire Forum For Empowering on 30 March 2016 Communities and it was agreed that the report should be taken to other Community Planning Boards as appropriate. The Greener Renfrewshire Community Planning Board agreed in June 2015 that the Living Streets report be brought back to the Board in due course.

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**Street Audit for  
Moss Street, Paisley to  
Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street,  
Paisley**

Date	Revised By:	Summary
24/11/15	Morven	Version One

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## **i      About Renfrewshire Access Panel**

Renfrewshire Access Panel is a small charity based in Renfrewshire dealing with accessibility. Originally we started with access to the built and natural environment and access to services although we are now delighted to be at the forefront of promoting access across its widest remit and endeavours to be fully inclusive in its approach. This means working across the private, public and third sector to remove physical and attitudinal barriers to equality, and to promote all aspects of independent living within the Renfrewshire community.

The Access Panel is run by a group of disabled Volunteers and we hope to try and make Renfrewshire accessible for all residents & visitors to the area. The Access Panel currently has thirty-six volunteers approximately and the committee is made up of four office bearers which are Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary. As the Access is panel is a charity, we are regulated by OSCR and they check and authorise our accounts each year.

The volunteers in the group have a wide range of disabilities and abilities ensuring we have a good knowledge of what access requirements are needed for the built and natural environment, services, education and any other access issue for any member of the community. We will deal with any access issue from anyone within Renfrewshire and all residents of Renfrewshire are welcome to our meetings. In our aim to too make Renfrewshire accessible for all people with disabilities we are making life easier for mums and dads etc. with prams, children on bikes or other wheeled toys and the elderly as they become infirm and frail.

We hold meetings bi-monthly and in the months in between, we have a working group that goes out into the community and checks access within the community. The Access Panel has also been asked to undertake access surveys for Renfrewshire Council, The Procurator Fiscals Office, Strathclyde Police and many of the local businesses.

Our Aim                                      To ensure Renfrewshire is fully accessible for all.

## ii Definition of Disability

What is disability?

When we think of disability we so often think of wheelchairs (understandable when you consider the disability symbol that is used *absolutely everywhere*), yet only 5% of disabled people actually use a wheelchair.

Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is considered to be disabled if they have

***"a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day-to-day activities"***

Lets break this down into simple terms:

### **Physical impairments**

Well, this could include anything from a loss of a limb to a dexterity or sensory impairment, such as visual or hearing. It would also include health conditions with fluctuating effects such as Diabetes, Cancer, Osteoporosis, MS, ME, Fibromyalgia, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and Arthritis. Also included would be progressive conditions such as Muscular Dystrophy and Motor Neurons Disease, and respiratory conditions such as Asthma, and Cardiovascular diseases, including Thrombosis, Stroke and Heart Disease. In fact, people with HIV, Cancer or Multiple Sclerosis, and people who are certified blind or partially sighted are protected by the Act from the point of diagnosis (they do not need to demonstrate that their condition has a long term, adverse effect on their daily life). Severe Disfigurement is also covered by the act (again no need to demonstrate adverse effects).

### **Mental impairments**

Well, this would include learning disabilities such as Downs Syndrome. It would also include developmental disorders such as Autism, Asperger's, Dyslexia and Dyspraxia. Also covered under mental impairments are mental health issues - this could include anything from severe Depression, Nervous Breakdown, OCD, Eating Disorders, Dementia, Bi-polar Disorder, Schizophrenia, as well as some personality disorders and self-harming behavior. In the past, a mental health condition had to be clinically recognised in order for it to be regarded as a mental impairment for the purposes of the Act. However, this requirement was removed in 2005.

### **Substantial**

Quite simply this means it must be more than minor or trivial

Long-term



This is where the effect of the impairment has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months. There are also special rules for recurring or fluctuating conditions.

### **Normal day-to-day activities**

Well, this would include everyday things that everyone does - like cooking a meal, having a bath or wash, or walking to the shop.

### **Past disabilities**

any person who has had a disability in the past (that meets the above definition) is also protected by the Act.

**THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS TO NEVER MAKE ASSUMPTIONS - SOMEONE WITH A DISABILITY CAN BE PHYSICALLY VERY FIT AND STRONG, HIGHLY INTELLIGENT AND ARTICULATE.**

### iii Principles of an Access Audit

An access audit is a measure of how well an environment and method of service delivery meets the needs of its users. It is also a process through which potential barriers to access may be identified and recorded alongside suggested improvements in a way that enables people responsible for a site, building or service to move on to the next step of planning and implementing change.

An access audit is a means of:

- ❖ examining the accessibility of services and facilities
- ❖ identifying where physical barriers may compromise access to services by assessing the feature against predetermined criteria
- ❖ measuring the 'usability' of facilities within a building and the services being delivered in it

The basic principle of an access audit is to assess the accessibility of an environment, its facilities and any services delivered from it, taking into account all existing and prospective building users.

Renfrewshire Access Panel has carried out a street audit on Moss Street, Gauze Street & Cotton Street, Paisley

Details of the Street Audit:

Address:

Moss Street, Paisley to Cenotaph  
Cenotaph down Gauze Street, Paisley  
Gauze Street, Paisley to Cotton Street covering the front of Paisley Town Hall and  
Circling round to the bottom end of Cotton Street

Surveyed By:       Stephen Cruickshank  
                          John Thomas  
                          Morven Cruickshank  
                          Megan O'Brien  
                          Stuart Graham, Engage Renfrewshire

Date Surveyed:       2<sup>nd</sup> October 2015

The findings of the access audit are detailed in the main report with pictures being referenced at the back of the report. We use the Executive Summary to highlight any issues and then the full details are found in the report again referenced to where it is in the report.

## V Street Audit - Moss Street, Gauze Street & Cotton Street, Paisley Full Audit Report

### 1 Transport

We have checked transportation to and from Paisley. There is a lot of good transport links to and from Paisley via bus, train and car although for many of the surrounding villages the transportation stops around 6pm and therefore leaving people stranded or forced to use taxis which is sometimes not an option due to financial restrictions.



1.1 By bicycle you can use the Sustrans National Cycle Route

1.2 By car you either take the M8 and exist at one of the junctions or enter by one of the many main roads into Paisley. There is metered parking controls operated by pay and display tickets and various car parks are available.

1.3 By rail

1.4 By bus

### Moss Street to the Cenotaph

#### Car Parking and Setting Down Points

2.1 There is an inadequate amount of Accessible parking spaces within Moss Street. The location of the accessible spaces to the dropped kerb is unacceptable as a person needs to travel 110 meters in the face of traffic to reach the dropped kerb although the location and proximity from the accessible spaces to the shops/café's is good.



2.2 There are no setting down points.

#### Pedestrian Routes

3.1 The pedestrian route from the bridge at the bottom of Moss Street to County Square is 140 meters in length with no dropped kerbs within this distance to allow access to any side of the street.

3.2 At the top of Moss Street there are no dropped kerbs to access County Square. On the day of the audit, panel members had to come off scooters and wheelchairs so that we could continue the audit. If we had a power chair user with us that day they would not been able to do this.

3.3 During the walk from the bottom of Moss Street, we would be lucky to travel ¼ a metre without a trip hazard. On one side of the street we found 5 major trip hazards and many minor trip hazards which were in a distance of 140 metres. All of these trip hazards will need to be addressed as anyone could cause a lot of problems for the council.

## **Shared Spaces**

4.1 When heading towards the cenotaph from Moss Street you reach the shared space for cars and pedestrians, although this area is supposed to be pedestrianised it is still used by cars and vans which is very hazardous depending on the size and speed of the vehicle.

4.2 As we continued on the route the trip hazards continued along with other obstacles such as street furniture. Although street furniture can be moved there is other larger issue such as the large blocks of granite placed for the aesthetically pleasing to the eye. The blocks of granite are both a trip and injury hazard because even if you don't fall you will have some severe injuries from walking into them which happens a lot of the time to visually impaired people but not only the visually impaired have problems with these as it is difficult to manoeuvre round the blocks with either a pram, wheelchair or scooter.

4.3 Finally, we reached the cenotaph with a huge number of trip hazards to report. We have detailed the trip hazards individually on a separate table. At this point we reset the measuring tools and start the journey from the cenotaph down Gauze Street.

## **Street Furniture**

5.1 The street furniture located within Moss Street is placed out in the street along with Industrial Waste bins with no markings to make people aware of their position. We measured up to one sign owned by a restaurant in Moss Street, the staff realised we were checking the location of the furniture and by the time we had reached the second sign they had moved it back into the wall in the correct position, which of course tells us that vendors are aware of the correct location for street furniture but abuse this as checking locations is not managed at present.

5.2 As we travelled further up Gauze Street the pavement becomes narrower leaving less room for street furniture, although the furniture was placed correctly there was no room for anyone to pass leaving prams/wheelchairs/scooters and people using walking aids to walk on the road.

5.3 As we entered the pedestrian only area there was street furniture anywhere and everywhere which causes congestion of people trying to get about. It is felt that monitoring of street furniture should be a priority to reduce people congestion in the pedestrian areas and also to ensure pavements are accessible to everyone.

### **Cenotaph down Gauze Street**

#### **Car Parking and Setting Down Points**

6.1 There are two accessible parking bays in Gauze Street again with no dropped kerb to access the pavement meaning people need to travel in the face of traffic to the dropped kerb which is located at the traffic lights.

6.2 There is no setting down points in Gauze Street.



### **Pedestrian Routes**

#### **Cenotaph down Gauze Street**

7.1 Gauze Street encompasses the town centre including the route past the town hall to the Council Buildings in Paisley and it is very concerning to think that a large number of people use this way to access Renfrewshire Council as the number of trip hazards increased by 100% so much so that we recommend a large number of sections are replaced as soon as possible which will not only protect the residents of the area but also Renfrewshire Council from claims.

7.2 There is also an increased number of granite blocks located in this area which is in addition to shop furniture outside their premises and bus stops although an essential part of transportation can also increase the chance of injury if not maintained properly.

### **Shared Spaces**

8.1 There are no shared spaces within this part of the audit.

### **Street Furniture**

9.1 There was a large problem with the street furniture in this area of town due to the varied hazards which could be uneven manhole covers to bike stands with no notification that it's even there. Shop street furniture is again causing problems by being too far out into the pavement. Again the marble dotted about provides a range of issues for all pedestrians.

9.2 The large concern for us would be the roadworks that were completed leaving hazardous conditions for all pedestrians.

### **Gauze Street to Cotton Street**

#### **Car Parking and Setting Down Points**

10.1 There are two accessible parking bays at either end of the parking bays in Cotton Street.

10.2 There are no setting down points in Cotton Street.



#### **Pedestrian Routes**

##### **Gauze Street to Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street**

11.1 The pavements between Gauze Street and Cotton Street are full of trip hazards and we would recommend that large areas of the pavements are fully re-surfaced. This is a route used by many council employees and visitors to Renfrewshire Council thus if not repaired then the council could be subject to a number of injury claims. We would also like to advise that a possible cause was the building of the new residence beside Renfrewshire House therefore would it be possible to request compensation from the home builder but again that is only one section.

11.2 The granite blocks continue on Gauze Street and at certain points beside the bus stop the pavement is no passable for either wheelchairs or prams.

#### **Shared Spaces**

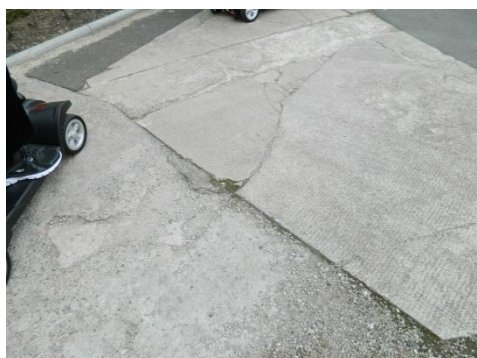
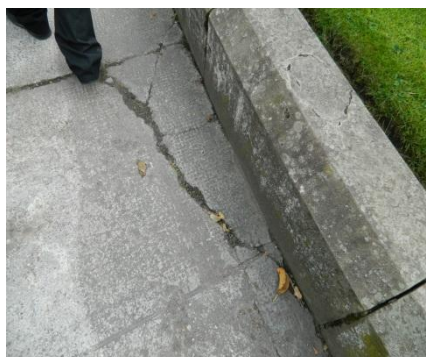
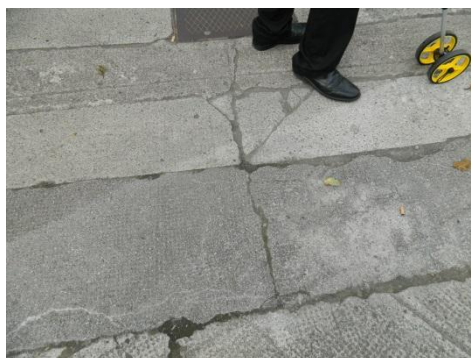
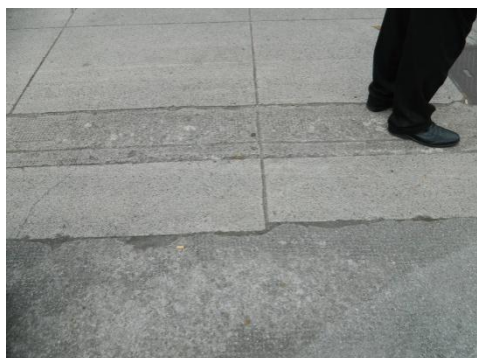
12.1 There are no shared spaces within this part of the audit.

#### **Street Furniture**

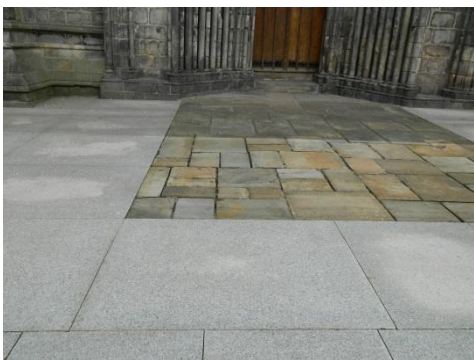
13.1 Apart from the issues at the bus stop in Gauze Street there are no problems with street furniture as this part of the street is many used by small business.



Please find below some of the photos, if required a cd can be provided with all Photographs.







## How to Contact us

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