



Report on Walking routes in Derry/Londonderry City Centre

July 2013

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About us

Imtac is a committee of disabled people and older people as well as others including key transport professionals. Our role is to advise Government and others in Northern Ireland on issues that affect the mobility of older people and disabled people.

Our aim is to ensure that older people and disabled people have the same opportunities as everyone else to travel when and where they want.

Imtac receives support from the Department for Regional Development.

About this report

This report is the third in a series of reports compiled by Imtac looking at the accessibility of key walking routes for disabled people and older people in town and city centres across Northern Ireland. The report was compiled following an inspection of Derry City centre in March 2013. It considers the provision of pedestrian facilities in the city measured against accepted accessibility standards¹. The report identifies potential barriers for disabled people and older people and recommends how these barriers could be resolved. The report also highlights examples of good practice in the city centre. A key aspect of the report is linkage between the pedestrian environment and the bus station in Derry. Given the importance of tourism we have also specifically looked at pedestrian access to key destinations including the historic Walls, the Craft Village and the Peace Bridge. We have produced two reports, a text only version and a version with photographs used to highlight barriers and good practice.

¹ For the most comprehensive guidance see [Inclusive Mobility \(Department for Transport 2005\)](#)

Our findings

The topography of Derry does pose challenges for disabled people and older people. Steep hills in and around the city centre makes providing fully inclusive access almost impossible. Despite these clear restrictions significant efforts have been made in Derry to improve the quality of walking routes and public realm in the city centre. Through the work we have undertaken there is little doubt that this investment has improved accessibility in the city. By and large the city now has good quality pavements with flush dropped kerb provision. For the most part pavements are clear from clutter that can reduce pavement width and create unnecessary barriers for pedestrians.

Despite the improvements difficulties still remain. Imtac has previously compiled a report² highlighting common barriers encountered in the pedestrian environment across Northern Ireland which were identified by talking with disabled people and older people. Many of these difficulties were also observed on the routes examined in this audit of Derry city centre including:

- Poorly maintained and uneven surfaces
- Poorly installed and maintained tactile paving
- Poorly installed controlled and uncontrolled crossings
- Clutter on pavements including bollards, bins, A-boards and seating
- Problems caused by illegal parking on pavements or across dropped kerbs

In particular the difficulties we have identified impact most significantly on people with a visual impairment. Work is now required to identify how some or all of these issues can be resolved. However it is essential that future improvements to the pedestrian environment are fully inclusive, taking account of the requirements of everyone including people with a visual impairment.

²[Highlighting barriers in the pedestrian environment - Report into issues, good practice and recommendations \(Imtac 2012\)](#)

Audit of key routes

Foyle Street

- 1 The pavement outside Foyle Street bus centre provides relatively good barrier free access in both directions.



- 2 There are bollards at the northern end of Foyle Street (close to the Guildhall). The design of the bollards fails to provide an acceptable contrasting band for people with a visual impairment.



- 3 The controlled crossing at the north end of Foyle Street does not follow standard practice in use of tactile paving as no tail is included. Telephone boxes obstruct access to the control box on the west side.



- 4 The pavement on the west side of Foyle Street is narrowed in places due to bus stops and A-Boards.



- 5 There is a reasonable example of a controlled crossing at the southern end of Foyle Street although the tail should be longer.



- 6 At the junction of Foyle Street and Water Street there is controlled crossing. As with 5 above the tactile tail should extend to the building line. Also there is an associated traffic island which includes non-standard use of tactile paving.



- 7 There is a raised uncontrolled crossing across Foyle Street (close to Foyleside shopping centre service yards). There is no tactile paving on this crossing.



- 8 Tactile paving should also be provided at the service yard entrance on Foyle Street.



Orchard Street

- 9 There is a controlled crossing at the junction of Foyle Street and Orchard Street. The control box is located too far from the tactile paving.



- 10 The location of trees and seating narrows the paving considerably on the northern side of Orchard Street. This makes the area difficult for some disabled people to navigate.



- 11 There is a vehicle entrance on the north side of the street. Whilst there are dropped kerbs these are not in-line and no tactile paving has been provided.



- 12 There is a controlled crossing near to the entrance of Foyleside Shopping Centre. The control button on the crossing is too far from the tactile paving. Bollards in the vicinity have no contrasting band.



- 13 The pavement on the northern side of Orchard Street is narrow in places. Poles and pillars further restrict access.



- 14 Bollards along the north side of the street have no contrasting band.



- 15 There is stepped access to Foyleside Shopping Centre. There is no corduroy hazard paving at these steps.



- 16 There is a controlled crossing at the western end of Orchard Street. The control box is placed too high and is too far from the tactile paving.



- 17 An A-Board and unmarked bollards restrict access to Foyleside.



Newmarket Street

- 18 There is a controlled crossing at the junction of Orchard Street and Newmarket Street. The control box is too far from the tactile paving.



19 Paving slabs in this area are loose and present a trip hazard.



20 There is an in-line uncontrolled crossing between two sections of the Walls.



- 21 There is no corduroy hazard paving around the steps in this area. Some attempt has been made to include a white band on bollards but this is not wide enough to provide an acceptable contrasting band.



- 22 There is a reasonable in-line uncontrolled crossing at the junction of Market Street and Newmarket Street. The tactile paving is non-standard and fails to provide adequate contrast.



- 23 There are a series of chrome bollards outside the Millennium Forum with no contrasting band to enhance visibility.



- 24 There is a dropped kerb with tactile paving on the south side of Newmarket Street. There is no provision on the other side.



- 25 There is corduroy hazard paving provided around the stepped entrance leading to the Richmond Centre. However the steps beside the entrance to the Centre have no hazard paving.



- 26 There is an inline uncontrolled crossing beside the stepped entrance to the Richmond Centre. No tactile paving has been provided and access is hampered by two chrome bollards without contrasting banding.



Linenhall Street

- 27 There are uncontrolled crossings at the service entrances on Linenhall Street. There is a problem with the alignment of the paving which may be confusing for people with a visual impairment.



Market Street

- 28 Vehicles parked on pavements restrict access on Market Street.



Ferryquay Gate

- 29 There are steep steps adjacent to Ferryquay Gate. These steps have no corduroy hazard paving.



- 30 At Ferryquay Gate Orchard Street, Bridge Street, Fountain Street, Carlisle Road and Ferryquay Street all meet in what is a very busy junction. Whilst there are dropped kerbs in the area there are problems with their alignment and none of the dropped kerbs have tactile paving



Carlisle Road

- 31 There is a good example of a controlled crossing at the northern end of Carlisle Road.



- 32 There are A-Boards on the pavement on Carlisle Road further restricting an already narrow pavement.



- 33 The in-line uncontrolled crossing at the junction with Horace Street has no tactile paving.



Bridge Street

- 34 There is a raised in-line uncontrolled crossing at the junction of Bridge Street and Orchard Street. There is no tactile paving at this junction. Bollards have a red and white contrasting band.



Ferryquay Street

35 The pavements on Ferryquay Street are generally free of clutter.



36 There are in-line uncontrolled crossings at the junctions with Artillery Street, Pump Street and Market Street. However the tactile paving is non-standard and provides no contrast with the surrounding paving. There are problems with the alignment of some of the tactile paving.



- 37 There is a controlled crossing at the northern end of Ferryquay Street (close to the Diamond). The control boxes on the crossings are too far from the tactile paving.



Bishop Street

- 38 There is a good in-line uncontrolled crossing at the northern end of Bishops Street. However the tactile paving does not provide any contrast with the surrounding pavement.



- 39 This issue is repeated with the in-line crossing at the junction with London Street.



- 40 The pavements on Bishop Street are generally free of clutter. The use of dish drainage channels is not ideal.



London Street

- 41 Parking and wheelie bins restrict an already narrow pavement on London Street. There is an absence of dropped kerbs in around London Street and Artillery Street. This significantly restricts access in and around this area for many disabled people including wheelchair users.



Butcher Street

- 42 Issues with contrast and tactiles are replicated on Butcher Street.



- 43 Bollards at the entrance to the Tower Hotel have no contrasting band and narrow the pavement.



The Diamond

- 44 Dish drainage channels pose hazards in and around the Diamond.



Shipquay Street

- 45 The in-line uncontrolled crossing at the junction with the Diamond uses tactile paving that does not contrast with the surrounding pavement.



- 46 A-Boards, street furniture and lighting columns restrict pavement width on the street.



- 47 Access to the in-line crossing at the junction of Castle Street is restricted by bollards (no contrasting band) and parked cars. There is the same issue with contrast and tactile paving.



- 48 The issue with contrast and tactile paving is present at the junction with Union Hall Place.



Shipquay Place

49 A-Boards are a problem on the pavement in this area.



Guildhall Street

50 Random blocks are poorly contrasted and present numerous hazards for people with a visual impairment.



- 51 Bollards at the controlled crossing are poorly contrast and reduce the benefits of a well-designed crossing.



- 52 Street furniture is contained within clear lines in the area.



53 Dish drainage channels are deep and present a potential hazard.



Access to Peace Bridge

54 Barriers across the path leading from Guildhall Street to Foyle Embankment have been erected to enhance safety for cyclists and pedestrians approaching a busy road. These create difficulties for people with a visual impairment and other disabled people.



- 55 There is a good example of a controlled crossing on Foyle Embankment.



- 56 There is a broad shared use cycle/pedestrian path on Foyle Embankment with appropriate use of tactile surfaces.



- 57 Bollards at the entrance to the Peace Bridge would benefit from the addition of a contrasting band.



Waterloo Place/Street

- 58 There is an in-line uncontrolled crossing. Contrast of tactile paving is again an issue. Other obstacles include bollards, stone cubes and inappropriately/illegally parked vehicles.



- 59 The use of dish drainage channels to demark the pedestrian and road surfaces in areas of Waterloo Place is not ideal but is preferable to no delineation.



- 60 Moving and parked cars, as well as random clutter makes Waterloo Street a difficult place for people with a visual impairment.



Strand Road

- 60 Clutter on the pavement is a problem at the southern end of Strand Road including some very large A-Boards.



- 61 There is an in-line uncontrolled crossing at Victoria Market. Non-standard tactile paving is used. Poorly designed bollards restrict access.



- 62 There is an in-line uncontrolled crossing at the junction with Sackville Street. Two different colours of tactile paving are used on one side, non-standard paving on the other. Bollards on one side present an additional obstruction.



- 63 There is a controlled crossing on Strand Road between the junctions with Sackville Street and Great James Street. There is no contrast between the tactile paving and the surrounding surfaces.



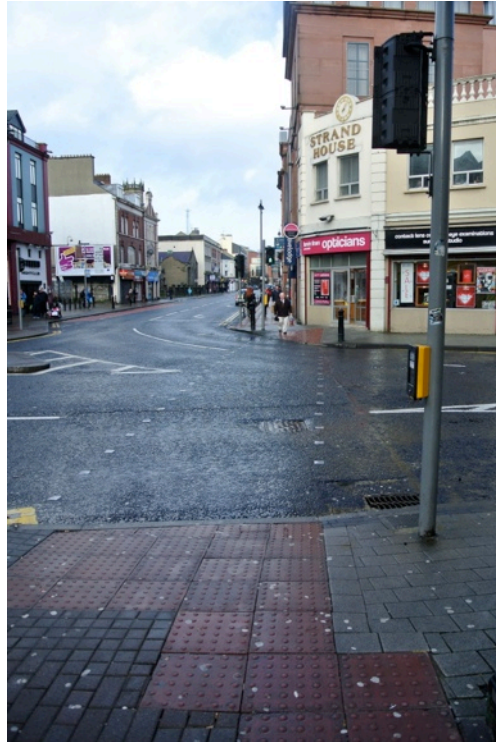
- 64 There are a series of controlled crossing at the junction with Great James Street. At the western end of Great James Street there is non-standard use of tactile paving and the control box is too far from the paving.



- 65 At the same junction there is a controlled crossing over Strand Road. Once again there is non-standard use of tactile paving and the control box is too far from the paving.



- 66 At the same junction there is controlled crossing at the eastern junction with Great James Street. Once again there is non-standard use of tactile paving and the control box is too far from the paving.



Magazine Street

- 67 Parked vehicles on pavements reduces access for all pedestrians.



- 68 In general pavement surfaces in the area are of a lesser quality than in other parts of the city.



- 69 There are limited crossings in the area. A raised uncontrolled crossing does not have any tactile paving.



Craft Village

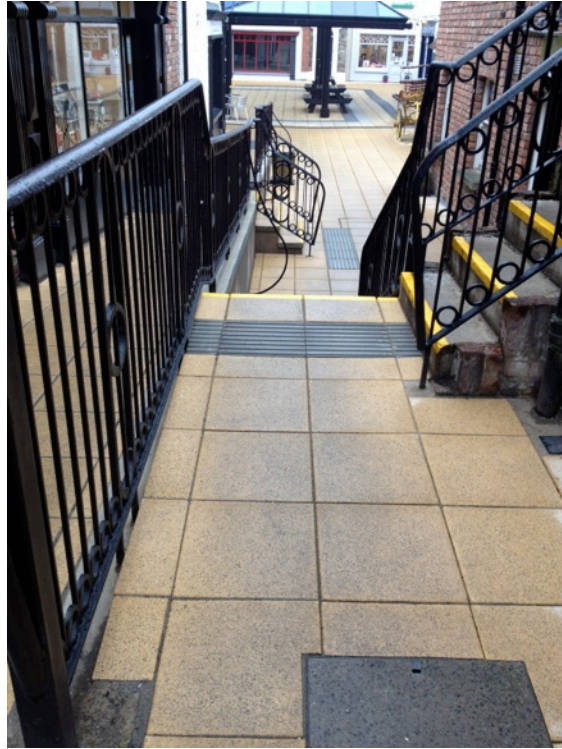
- 70 In general significant efforts have been made to improve pedestrian access to what is an historic area of the city centre.



- 71 Contrasting bands have been added to the nosing of steps.



72 Corduroy hazard paving is included around steps.



73 A ramp has been included to aid access between levels.



- 74 While not possible with every premise footway levels have been constructed to offer level access to a significant number.



Historic walls

- 75 In general access to the walls is difficult for disabled people due to their status as an historic monument and the topography of the area which limit opportunities to make even reasonable improvements.



- 76 Conservation requirements appear to restrict those changes that could make the walls more inclusive by the inclusion of contrasting step nosings and hand rails as well as providing tactile surfaces. They also potentially limit opportunities to providing level and even surfaces.



- 78 The sections of the wall between Newmarket Street and Bishops Gate are particularly challenging with very steep gradients and stepped access.



- 79 Other sections of the wall are less challenging and ramped access with handrails is provided in two locations (Magazine Gate & Castle Gate).



- 80 An inclusive route could be devised including the more accessible parts of the walls with alternative routes identified and signed around the more challenging sections to include attractions such as St Columbs Cathedral. St Columbs also allows barrier free access to further sections of the walls between Newmarket Street and Bishops Gate. Work is required to provide in-line crossings with dropped kerbs on both London Street and Artillery Street if alternative routes are to be made accessible.

Next Steps

Intac has previously been involved in a similar audit of pedestrian facilities in Belfast City Centre³. Following the publication of the Belfast report meetings were held with Roads Service to identify actions to address the barriers identified. Actions were identified as achievable in the short term, medium term and the longer term.

³ Belfast Streets Ahead Quality Walking Corridor Review (Aecom 2010)

The Committee proposes that a similar approach is taken in Derry. Following the publication of this report we will seek to meet with Roads Service to identify achievable actions to address the barriers identified in the report. We will seek to involve local organisations of and for disabled people in these discussions. Given issues for people with a visual impairment Imtac will seek to work with both Guide Dogs and RNIB at a local level to identify how some of the barriers can be removed or reduced. The Committee will also seek to work with Shopmobility Foyle and others to develop accessible walking routes within the city centre.