

PE1595/MM

Gillian Taggart Email of 20 January 2016

Dear Sir/ Madam

I wish to add my support to the above petition, submitted by Alexander Taylor, calling for a moratorium on Shared Spaces.

Shared Spaces will have a very negative effect on my family and friends. I am visually impaired and have to use a wheelchair. The Shared Space, due to begin in my town, will take away what little independence I have left. The trial period with Shared Space was a terrifying experience for myself and elderly parents. We were unable to use the crossings as no one would stop to let us cross. Some drivers even went faster than normal on the busy junction. We shopped elsewhere during that time.

I will not have access to the Library to meet my friends and their children in the café there, or my two book groups, as there will be no safe place to cross. The Council Hub is also in that building, and I can imagine a lot of elderly people will be very reluctant to cross busy traffic without the safe crossing there at the moment. A very steep hill (too steep for a wheelchair) and a blind corner make this a dangerous one. My only alternative is only a taxi or a lift from a friend. Many older friends I have spoken to will be doing the same, bringing more traffic - not less, into the town centre. The other side of the Main Street to where I live will be inaccessible to me except by taxi. I will be shopping and socialising much less, as it will be far too expensive. My 1 week old powered wheelchair will not be used much I fear.

Shared space is making our towns and cities inaccessible to people in wheelchairs, taking away independence from the blind, elderly and people with additional support needs. It will be a very intimidating place to take a baby in a pushchair. The local nurseries must be very wary, as I was as a teacher, of taking double and quadruple buggies full of small babies out, especially now in a Shared Space. How they will fill in a Risk Assessment Sheet in the future or where they will be able to take the children is debateable. Their library trips will be off limits.

I worry for the future of my town. It will not be such a nice place to live and I'm afraid of how badly it will be changed, and probably never recover, as people will shop elsewhere – somewhere safer and more relaxing.

I hereby give consent for this submission to be included on your website.

Gillian Taggart