

PE1595/OOO

Letter from Sarah Gayton of 23 September 2016

Further evidence to support Sandy Taylors petition for a moratorium on shared P1595 space due to safety and equality concerns.

Extensive research has been undertaken on shared space schemes through Freedom of Information Requests, analysis of crash map to look at accident data and from reports made in local newspapers on safety and equality concerns raised in shared space. The information from the FOI and original data sources can be provided on request to substantiate the evidence given below.

What the evidence does show quite clearly

- That in designing shared space schemes councils are not paying due regard to the needs of a variety of pedestrian groups, particularly including blind people and vulnerable people and, as a result, these groups are being put at greater risk of harm or experiencing significantly negative impacts on their ability to navigate streets. Resulting in death, serious injury and exclusion from the high street.
- Incorrect or inconsistent data is being used in relation to accidents and driver behavior
- A number of shared space schemes have had changes made to them since they were first introduced in response to problems experienced by both pedestrians and drivers with these changes indicative of flaws in design

Fatal Impact on Vulnerable Pedestrians

The death toll on vulnerable pedestrian in shared space is now 5, with the latest tragic victim, 3 year old Clinton Pringle from Scotland who was on holiday in Jersey when he was struck by a van in shared space. Media reports, such as [on the BBC news website](#), show quite clearly the road looks like it is pedestrianised.

Other victims include:

- A 9 year old girl killed on a courtesy crossing in Swindon, who was blamed for her own confusion that she thought it was a proper crossing
- A partially sighted pensioner in Coventry where the scheme was so confusing this was bound to happen
- Two further pensioners one in Leek, where the coroner recommended putting back safety railings and one pensioner in Poole.

Incorrect or Inconsistent Data Being Used To Promote Shared Space In Relation To Accidents and Driver Behavior

The research has alarmingly found a number of two prominent shared space schemes have quoted higher than recorded serious number of accidents occurring before

shared space was introduced and number where the rate of accident has not fallen at the rates first claimed and others where there has been an increase in severity of accidents. This information found underpins the safety concerns raised by Sandy Taylor when asking for a moratorium on shared spaces. The sites include:

- **Poynton in East Cheshire**

Claimed 4 - 7 serious accidents happened in each of 3 years leading up to the introduction of the scheme in competition entry in 2013, however FOI from Cheshire Police stated there were only 4 serious accidents in 2009.

- **Julian Road in Bath**

Claimed that there were 9 serious injuries and 1 death 3 year prior to scheme being introduced in Manual for Streets 2 (2010) and 5 accidents from 2002 to 2006 in 'Street Design for All – An Update of National Advice and Good Practice' (2014). However, FOI from Bath and North East Council only found 2 serious accidents in the 8 years prior to the scheme being introduced.

Scheme was used in high profile 'Street Design for All – An Update of National Advice and Good Practice in 2014, however scheme was ripped up in 2012 and replaced with zebra crossings due to road surface failing and local people having many problems trying to cross the road close to a school. One of the road charities represented on the document was challenged on the accuracy of the publication due to the scheme not existing at the time of publication and the difference of accident figures and they stated the publication was accurate going to print. However, the document is mis-leading as the scheme literally was dug up in 2012 and replaced by zebra crossing. This calls into question the ability of the charity sector to be able to investigate itself in an open and transparent manner on the issue of shared space road design.

- **Ashford in Kent**

This scheme is often quoted as have a 41% reduction in accidents when shared space was introduced. However, now 7 years worth of pre and post accident data is available it would appear there has been:

- Overall 6 less minor incidents
- Increase from 1 serious accidents to 6 in the shared space area.

The exact location of accidents on the FOI data / crash used comes with certain limitations to where the exact start and finish of the scheme is and the accuracy of accident locations; however it is quite clear the long held believe that the shared space reduced accidents by 41% needs to re-examined and the increase in serious incidents indicates this shared space is not saver.

When this scheme is used as an example to people in presentations like in professional planners in Toronto it is not made clear that only part of the Ashford ring was changed to shared space and that there has always been a traffic light controlled crossing in the scheme.

Other schemes also show increase in severity of accidents and data can be provided on request, including South End on Sea City Beach Development, Bethlehem Street in Grimsby. Deaths in Leek, Coventry, Poole and Swindon courtesy crossing.

There is also an alarming number of trip accidents occurring as schemes as councils in England have been putting in small kerbs in same colour as road way or as crazy paving, resulting in horrific facial injuries, broken bones and shattered confidence in the town centers visited. Photographic evidence of these injuries have been included in media stories and further evidence of these can be provided on request.

Research has shown that driver behavior in certain schemes has not been modified and in certain examples congestion has resulted form new schemes being implemented. The research has also brought up serious questions on how Coventry shared space final speed monitoring was undertaken.

- **Exhibition Road**

The design speed is 20mph.

'Quality 4 Road Safety Audit for Exhibition Road / Prince Consort Road Junction 12' February 2013 gave the following speeds monitored in the 'Evaluating Performance – Exhibition Road Monitoring' MVA August 2012:

- The 85th percentile speed for Exhibition Road southbound approach to the Prince Consort Road junction was measured in the range of 25.8 to 33.5mph.
- The 85th percentile speed for Exhibition Road northbound approach to the Prince Consort Road junction was measured in the range of 24.0 to 31.0mph.

Research by MSV in 'Understanding Shared Space' by Stuart Reid MVA Consultancy CIHT 4th October 2011, showed at 8-10 mph only 40% of vehicle drivers would give way to pedestrians which dropped to way less than 10% at speeds of 17 – 19 mph, as show in Screen Grab 1 below.

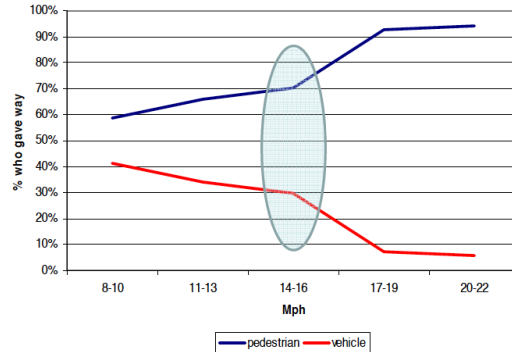
Quality Audit 4 reported pedestrians gave way to vehicles in section that was audited.

This examples shows the design speed was not met of 20mph and that pedestrians are the ones that are giving way to cars preventing the area being a shared space.

New Research - Who Gives Way to Whom

More drivers give way at or below 15mph

Sharing - dynamic process - feedback



mvaconsultancy

Research by MSV in 'Understanding Shared Space' by Stuart Reid MVA Consultancy CIHT 4th October 2011

- **Coventry**

In Coventry City Council promotional document 'Coventry City Centre: Public Realm Scheme' states it has reduced speeds down to 15.7mph in the shared space. However, the speed monitoring was done from 13/01/13 to 20/01/13 (Section 5.12, Page 6, Coventry City Councils 'Streets and Neighborhoods Scrutiny Board Meeting' 27/02/13 'Coventry 2012 Public Realm Works 12 Month Monitoring Report' when there was intense wintery conditions prevailing in the city and surrounding areas. BBC Coventry and Warwick reports on 18th January 2013 'Coventry and Warwickshire Ice Warning as more snow forecast' and on 19th January 2013 'Drivers warned as ice persists in Coventry and Warwick'. Official MET office for this period available on request recorded wintery conditions during this period.

Questions need to be asked why the final speed monitoring undertaken in Coventry shared spaces in winter conditions which have the potential to affect speed data and number of vehicles entering city center and why was the monitoring repeated during different weather conditions?

- **Kimbrose Triangle in Gloucester**

A courtesy crossing was recently constructed in Kimbrose Triangle shared space in Gloucester as many complaints people could not cross the road.

Research confirmed only 21% of drivers stopped to let pedestrians pass in the shared space and after the installation of a courtesy crossing which looks very much like a traditional zebra crossing 97% of vehicles stopped for pedestrians to cross. Indicating drivers know to stop at zebra crossings.

However, the crossing looks like a zebra crossing but is actually a courtesy crossing with no legal standing, as confirmed by letter by Robert Goodwill, former Minister of Transport dated 16 April 2015. It is not understood why proper controlled crossing was not installed to prevent any confusion.

This crossing still causes problems for blind people trying to use it as; Bill Wardell, Gloucester Representative of the National Federation of the Blind of the UK has tried on several occasions to tell the council that a controlled crossing is needed but they have not acted on his advice. Bill wanted a pelican / puffin crossing which he also believes would tackle the congestion problem as it would cars and people their own time to cross the road.

Local newspapers report the area causes congestion as pedestrians now stream across leaving vehicles no opportunity to pass the area, see Gloucester Live September 2016 'Motorists caught in queues in Gloucester's Kimbrose Triangle.

- **Preston Fishergate Scheme**

The 'Fishergate' Shared Space was awarded the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation National de-cluttering Prize in 2016. However the scheme has had severe congestion problems running up to Christmas 2015 and had to bring in marshals with stop go signs as shoppers were stuck in car-parks for hours because drivers were not showing courtesy and at one of the bank holiday's in 2016 when police were brought in to manage traffic to get it moving again. The Lancashire Evening Post summed it up quiet well with the headlines 'Chaos What Chaos?

There is also a bollard which has now become immortalized on twitter @FishergateBlld as it has caused many accidents with cars running into it and landing on it, causing damage to vehicles. There have been other reported accidents and concerns raised about blind people accessing the scheme in the local news and BBC Lancashire Radio.

New no entry signs were erected in the scheme just being the awards were announced to try and rectify the problem.

Questions have to be asked how such a scheme can be awarded national recognition when so many problems have been associated with it?

Schemes that have U-turned

I think it is critical that the petitions committee understand the full extent of shared space schemes that have u-turned in England, however, just because the schemes have added courtesy crossings, zebra crossings and some limited kerbing however this does not mean are still fully accessible to blind, disabled and vulnerable pedestrians. All schemes need an urgent accessibility audit as recommended by the Lord Chris Holmes report 'Accidents By Design' 2015. 14 Schemes that have u-turned:

- Hanley Kerbs being replaced
- Grimsby Zebra crossing installed / re-tarmacked
- Blackpool Zebra crossings installed / re-tarmacked
- Hackbridge Zebra and Puffin crossings installed
- Gloucester Informal crossing - looks like zebra installed
- Tolworth Broadway Kerbs replaced
- Ashford Puffin crossing installed from start/artwork dug up
- Warwick Puffin crossing installed
- Coventry Zebra crossings installed after pensioner killed
- Horsham Shared space pedestrianised
- Dunstable Zebra crossing installed
- Corby Zebra crossing installed
- Southend on Sea Informal crossings installed - blind people not use them
- Bath Shared space ripped up replaced with zebra crossing

There are also serious construction and maintenance problems with many schemes, which can be supplied on request.

Unexpected Findings from Detailed Research

- **Advice Given To Councils To Encourage Them To Ignore Concerns of Special Interest Groups**

From FOI returns two incidents have been found where councils have been encouraged to ignore the needs of special interest groups, visually impaired and elderly people in 2007 and 2015 when raising concerns on shared space road design in Suffolk and in Cornwall. Reports written by Guide dogs in 2006 raising serious concerns on the use of shared space and Lord Chris Holmes Report 'Accidents By Design' in 2015 were criticized dismissed

- **Councils not able to say how blind and deaf-blind people will independently use schemes**

Councils in Leicester, Cornwall, East Dunbartonshire and the Scottish Government could not provide specific details on how blind and deaf-blind people could be trained to use shared space roads independently.

- **Highway Authorities Lack No Regulatory Body**

No regulatory body that can control highway authorities.

Some examples of councils in England undertaking the design and safety auditing of shared space schemes, which raises significant questions on how the same organization can audit its own work in an open and transparent manner, examples of this have been found in the Felixstowe and Poole schemes.

- **Concerns raised on accident reporting and classification of deaths,**

serious and minor accidents

Road safety literature has been found that raises concerns over the accuracy of police reporting on the severity of accidents, therefore the true classification and number of accidents are not known; deaths are only recorded after if injured person died less than 30 days of the accident and are recorded as serious accident if they die after this date. The death of the pensioner in Coventry shared space is recorded as a serious injury when in fact it was a death; people looking at crash map on deaths in shared space would not pick this up with out local knowledge of the area.

- **Trip accidents are not being recorded on road accident data**

Trip accidents are not being recorded as road traffic accidents and therefore the number and extent of injuries are not being classified or analysis to prevent future problems happening.

Modern road design should not:

- Exclude any disabled or vulnerable person from using it independently; by taking away accessibility features that allow blind, deaf-blind, visually impaired, disabled and vulnerable people to use their high street independently
- Design should not scare the wits out of them trying to use it.
- Not increase the severity of accidents
- Not cause any form of confusion leading to deaths
- Not under go expensive U-turns and remediation schemes

What does this mean for Scotland and Sandy's Taylor's petition?

With the other evidence submitted on the problems blind, disabled and vulnerable groups on shared space, it is hoped that this evidence, which can be substantiated with FOI data, crash map data and from other research sources will give the confidence to the Petitions Committee to fully support Sandy Taylor to ask for an immediate moratorium on shared space.

With the launch of the Minister for Transport's new Framework for Accessible Transport on 22nd September 2016 there has to be a moratorium on shared space as the design is simply not compatible with the Ministers and Scottish Government's new vision of a transport network that serves everybody.

I would urge for all schemes that have been built in Scotland to under go an immediate accessibility audit and program of works drawn up to make them accessible for all.

I also urge you to bring an immediate stop to the works in Kirkintilloch given safety concerns and now been raised by elected MSP Rona Mackay to the CEO of the east Dunbartonshire Council and continued accessibility concerns from the East Dunbartonshire Visually Impaired People Forum and insist new design has to be accessible for all.