

## PE1595/UU

Sarah Gayton Letter of 20 January 2016

I am writing to fully support Alexander Taylor in his petition to get a moratorium on shared space road designs in Scotland. Shared space has been reported by the Equality and Human Rights Commission to the United Nations under Article 9 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In 2015 the Scottish Government went out on consultation on its draft delivery plan of this UN Convention, which Access to Transport is a key feature. The Scottish Government stated in the opening sections of the consultation on what they were doing to tackle inequality and advance disabled people's rights in Scotland<sup>1</sup>, in relation to Alexander Taylors petition, the following extracts are important:

'At the heart of the Scottish approach to social justice is our ambition to build a fairer Scotland. As a Government we are strongly committed to promoting and protecting equality and human rights for disabled people. We want to ensure that disabled people can realise their rights, and be able to participate in society as full and equal citizens. We recognise that there is more to do, and this plan sets out our commitments for the next four years. Our new activity will build further on the firm foundations and progress we have already achieved:

- We are taking action to remove barriers and improve access to housing and transport.
- We are determined to address specific inequalities experienced by particular groups.
- We are implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).'

In particular it for access to transport:

'We are also investing heavily in making transport more accessible. Transport Scotland sponsors the Mobility and Access Committee Scotland (MACS) to advise Scottish Ministers on improving the accessibility of public transport services for disabled travelers'

and

'Earlier this year (2015) Transport Scotland hosted a Transport Accessibility Summit which brought together disabled people and transport providers to discuss transport issues affecting disabled people in Scotland. The Summit highlighted the need to work together in partnership to improve journeys for disabled people on public transport.'

The consultation<sup>2</sup> also stated where it wanted to be:

'The Scottish Government wants to create a society where disabled people have equal access to housing, transport and services. This will be achieved by actively involving disabled people in service planning and design, so that their needs are properly understood and met.'

One of the outcomes of the Accessibility Summit online consultation was the problem of shared space roads was in the top 5 issues raised on the question asked on deliverability<sup>3</sup> with the following reported:

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2015/09/6979/318261>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2015/09/6979/318262>

‘Consider dangers when vehicles and pedestrians share the same space without obvious dividing lines and consult disabled people for solutions’

And shared space was identified in the local events as an emerging issue<sup>4</sup> with the following reported:

‘Consider the dangers of shared space between vehicles and people on foot.’

However, it would appear shared space road design has not been assessed for safety or accessibility for blind or disabled people in Scotland. MACS raised serious concerns on shared space in 2009 in the draft Designing Streets consultation<sup>5</sup> and it would appear their concerns were never acted upon as they recommended that no more shared spaces be introduced in Scotland until the new Department of Transport's Shared Space Guidance<sup>6</sup> had been assessed by them. However, in the 2011–2012 MACS Annual Report MACS stated this Guidance was not legislatively relevant in Scotland<sup>7</sup>. However, it would appear that Scottish Local Authorities are using it in designing schemes, as in Kirkintilloch, with out no official assessment of by MACS. Evidence is given below on some of the accidents, the problems blind people are facing in these schemes and schemes which have u turned in the UK:

## Deaths

Coventry<sup>8</sup>, Leek<sup>9</sup>, Swindon<sup>10</sup>, Poole<sup>11</sup>

## Accidents

Swindon<sup>12 13</sup>, Warwick<sup>14 15</sup>, Newcastle Upon Tyne<sup>16</sup>, Blackpool<sup>17 18 19</sup>, Preston<sup>20</sup>, Hackbridge<sup>21 22 23</sup>, Coventry<sup>24</sup>, Kimbrose Triangle<sup>25</sup>, Dunstable<sup>26</sup>, Leek<sup>27</sup>, Southend on

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/report/j384976-01.htm>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/system/files/documents/reports/TSA.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/system/files/documents/consultations/Consultation\\_on\\_Designing\\_Streets.pdf](http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/system/files/documents/consultations/Consultation_on_Designing_Streets.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/shared-space>

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/system/files/documents/tsc-basic-pages/MACS\\_-\\_Annual\\_Report\\_2011-12\\_-\\_PDF\\_Version.pdf](http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/system/files/documents/tsc-basic-pages/MACS_-_Annual_Report_2011-12_-_PDF_Version.pdf) (para 8.3.6)

<sup>8</sup> *Crossing confusion after Coventry bus death trial collapses*, Coventry Telegraph, 30 January 2013

<sup>9</sup> *Pensioner's 'tragic' death in road accident leads to calls for changes to 'dangerous' layout*, Stoke Sentinel, 2 April 2015

<sup>10</sup> *[Girl], 9, killed after riding her scooter into path of bus in Swindon, inquest hears*, Western Daily Press, 2 July 2014

<sup>11</sup> *Parkstone residents demand changes to 'lethal' roundabout months after death of pedestrian*, Bournemouth Echo, 23 February 2015

<sup>12</sup> *Calls for CCTV at Regent Circus*, This is Wiltshire, 12 January 2016

<sup>13</sup> *Woman's plea after Regent Circus accident*, Swindon Advertiser, 20 August 2014

<sup>14</sup> *Glamorous 'shared space' may be at expense of safety*, Coventry Observer, 22 October 2015

<sup>15</sup> *Charities for the blind hit out over shared spaces in Warwick*, Coventry Telegraph, 1 March 2013

<sup>16</sup> *Newcastle Council concerned at city centre road accidents*, BBC News, Tyne and Wear, 9 April 2014

<sup>17</sup> *I'm not sure this is the best parking spot...*, Blackpool Gazette, 31 January 2014

<sup>18</sup> *Crash on new-look Prom*, Blackpool Gazette, 21 July 2011

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.senedd.assembly.wales/documents/s10015/Correspondence%20-%20Petitioner%20to%20Clerk.html?CT=2>

<sup>20</sup> *New feature is a menace and History of bad road decisions*, Reader's letters, Yorkshire Evening Post, 26 February 2015

<sup>21</sup> *Lords discuss 'disastrous' shared road crossings where pedestrians and motorists duel for right of way*, Sutton Guardian, Report, 16 January 2015

<sup>22</sup> *Woman injured after moped and car crash in London Road*, Sutton Guardian, 2 October 2015

<sup>23</sup> *Child hit by car at Hackbridge pedestrian crossing*, Your Local Guardian, 1 October 2015

<sup>24</sup> *Man hit by bus near Coventry shared space junction*, Coventry Telegraph, 23 April 2013

<sup>25</sup> *Pram clipped by car in Gloucester's controversial shared space*, Gloucester Citizen, 6 July 2011

<sup>26</sup> *Shared space not suitable for all users*, Dunstable Today, 22 May 2013

Sea<sup>28 29 30 31 32 33</sup>, Felixstowe<sup>34</sup>, Aylesbury<sup>35 36</sup>, Bexleyheath<sup>37 38</sup>, Hereford<sup>39</sup>, Pontypridd<sup>40</sup> Grimsby<sup>41 42</sup>

### Problems for Blind People

Reading<sup>43 44 45</sup>, Sea of Change Film<sup>46</sup>, Belfast<sup>47</sup>, Preston<sup>48 49</sup>, Leicester<sup>50</sup>, Wakefield<sup>51</sup>, Ashford<sup>52 53</sup>, Grimsby<sup>54</sup>, Hackbridge<sup>55</sup>, Swindon<sup>56</sup>, Bexleyheath<sup>57 58</sup>, Blackpool<sup>59</sup>, Southend on Sea<sup>60 61</sup>, Caernarfon<sup>62 63 64</sup>, Warwick<sup>65</sup>, Coventry<sup>66</sup>, Leek<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> *Elderly man hurt in crash*, Leek Post and Times, 8 August 2013

<sup>28</sup> *Cyclist collides with car on new shared space crossing*, Gazette News, 9 May 2013

<sup>29</sup> Sarfend Forum, 22 September 2011

<sup>30</sup> *Southend seafront shared space is 'confusing'*, Echo News, 26 September 2011

<sup>31</sup> *Council defends shared space after child hurt on Southend seafront*, Echo News, 12 August 2011

<sup>32</sup> *Young boy hit by CCTV car on Southend seafront*, News Shopper, 4 August 2011

<sup>33</sup> *Woman in wheelchair knocked over by bus*, Southend Standard, 13 March 2013

<sup>34</sup> *Felixstowe: Pedestrian injured in town centre accident as car crashes through shop window*, East Anglian Daily Times, 8 September 2011

<sup>35</sup> *Should Aylesbury town centre speed limits be reduced to 20mph following crash?*, Bucks Herald, 9 December 2009

<sup>36</sup> *Council video teaches people how to cross road in Aylesbury*, Bucks Herald, 15 September 2010

<sup>37</sup> *'Massive pile-up' in Bexleyheath as two bus smash leaves 16 people injured*, Evening Standard, 7 July 2015

<sup>38</sup> *'Why are you [...] stopping at the roundabout?' - Bexleyheath Albion Road junction causes yet another crash*, This is Local London, 26 April 2014

<sup>39</sup> *Number of people falling in Widemarsh Street revealed*, Hereford Times, 6 August 2012

<sup>40</sup> *More than 20 shoppers hospitalised and grandmother injured after council install 'crazy paving' which created treacherous optical illusion which hides kerb*, Daily Mail, 14 October 2013

<sup>41</sup> *The pavement that's REALLY crazy: Woman, 74, suffers horrific injuries after she was dazzled by 'invisible' new kerb stones*, Daily Mail, 12 May 2014

<sup>42</sup> *Call for crossing after elderly couple are knocked down in Grimsby's Bethlehem Street*, Grimsby Telegraph, 14 February 2015

<sup>43</sup> *Blind charities protest at traffic lights switch-off in Reading town centre*, Get Reading, 30 March 2015

<sup>44</sup> *Reading traffic lights deemed unsafe*, ITV Meridian, 4 February 2015

<sup>45</sup> *Blind struggling in Reading town centre*, BBC Berkshire video (available on YouTube)

<sup>46</sup> *Sea of Change Film – Walking into Trouble* (available on YouTube)

<sup>47</sup> *Blind woman to challenge size of kerbs in Lisburn, as she says they're too small for guide dogs*, Belfast Telegraph, 22 March 2015

<sup>48</sup> *Blind fears over new road layout*, Lancashire Evening Post, 10 September 2014

<sup>49</sup> *Dangers of new look road, Reader's letters*, Lancashire Evening Post, 12 September 2014

<sup>50</sup> Interviews with a blind resident of Leicester, a wheelchair user resident in Leicester and a disabled resident of Leicester for *Sea of Change Film – Walking into Trouble 2* (available on YouTube)

<sup>51</sup> *Taking on the Bullring challenge*, Wakefield Express, 26 October 2014

<sup>52</sup> *Campaign for Shared Space safety - 'blind' MP's concerns*, Ashford Herald, 10 October 2014

<sup>53</sup> *Ashford's shared space demo brings swift defence*, Kent News, 8 June 2009

<sup>54</sup> *'Shared spaces' in Grimsby town centre a 'death trap' for blind and partially sighted people*, Grimsby Telegraph, 16 January 2014

<sup>55</sup> *Blind charity worker condemns Hackbridge crossing and says he is 'too scared' to go there*, Your Local Guardian, 2 October 2014

<sup>56</sup> *Regent Circus is a no-go zone for blind people*, Swindon Advertiser, 9 August 2014

<sup>57</sup> *'Ridiculous' Bexleyheath Broadway crossing continues to anger residents*, This is Local London, 9 April 2014

<sup>58</sup> *New Bexleyheath junction designed without any consideration for pedestrians*, News Shopper, 4 September 2013

<sup>59</sup> *New junction blasted by pedestrians*, Blackpool Gazette, 21 January 2014

<sup>60</sup> *[Woman] reports shared space works to UN*, Echo News, 9 July 2013

<sup>61</sup> *Protesters block Southend buses over danger of shared spaces*, Can Do Can Go, News, 18 October 2011

<sup>62</sup> *Caernarfon Castle Square parking ban for many motorists*, BBC News, North West Wales, 11 July 2011

<sup>63</sup> *Blind have safety concerns over Caernarfon crossing*, Daily Post, 19 April 2013

<sup>64</sup> *Politician slams 'unsafe' Caernarfon square*, Daily Post, 20 August 2009

<sup>65</sup> *Charities for the blind hit out over shared spaces in Warwick*, Coventry Telegraph, 25 April 2013

<sup>66</sup> *Family of man who died at Coventry 'shared space' plan demo against new junctions*, Coventry Telegraph, 25 April 2015

<sup>67</sup> *Blind safety fears over roads layout*, Leek Post and Times, 15 January 2013

## U Turns

Warwick<sup>68</sup>, Julian Road<sup>69</sup>, Hackbridge<sup>70</sup>, IOM<sup>71</sup>, Tolworth Broadway<sup>72</sup>, Blackpool,<sup>73 74</sup> Kimbrose Triangle<sup>75 76</sup>, Dunstable<sup>77</sup> Grimsby<sup>78 79</sup>

If the Scottish Government truly believes in adhering to its legal obligations under the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its own commitment to involve, listen and act upon the concerns of disabled people it will act upon Mr Taylor's request for a moratorium on shared space road design in Scotland with an immediate effect. Evidence provided by Mr Taylor, the Scottish Government's own Accessibility summit, submissions from disabled groups and individuals, and the above evidence is sufficient to bring a stop to this design approach in Scotland. Failure to act upon these concerns would make the Scottish Government's commitment to the UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities a sham and the outcomes of the 2015 Accessibility Summit meaningless.

Scotland has a unique opportunity, to act upon your own policies, to act upon concerns raised by disabled people and to ensure regeneration is undertaken is inclusive for all. Inclusive accessibility for all is non-negotiable and should underpin every single contract and works undertaken on the public highway in Scotland. Shared space excludes blind people and only designs that include all disabled people should be allowed to proceed.

I trust Scotland will ensure equality for all & grant Mr Taylor his wishes under this petition.

Sarah Gayton, BSc (Hons), MSc, PG Cert, CIWM  
Award Winning Film Director Sea of Change Film Walking Into Trouble

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<sup>68</sup> *Work finally complete to make Warwick town centre safer*, Leamington Courier, 22 January 2014

<sup>69</sup> *Corn Street - plans by the Council to open it up to through traffic*, Bishopston Society, News, 18 October 2012

<sup>70</sup> *Council u-turns over controversial Hackbridge road layout*, Your Local Guardian, 4 June 2015

<sup>71</sup> *Brakes slammed on shared space promenade scheme*, Isle of Man Today, 4 August 2015

<sup>72</sup> *Tolworth Broadway being dug up less than two years after it was "revitalised"*, Radio Jackie News, 23 April 2015

<sup>73</sup> *U-turn over crossings*, Blackpool Gazette, 4 January 2015

<sup>74</sup> *'Shared Space' Prom facing yet more work*, Blackpool Gazette, 30 June 2015

<sup>75</sup> *Zebra crossing coming to shared space at Gloucester's Kimbrose Triangle*, Gloucester Citizen, 23 December 2014

<sup>76</sup> *Blind people will still be at risk at new Kimbrose Triangle crossing, say charity leaders*, Gloucester Citizen, 19 May 2015

<sup>77</sup> *Crossings for Court Drive after survey*, Dunstable Today, 18 June 2014

<sup>78</sup> *Part of Grimsby town centre paving to be relaid at junction near railway station*, Grimsby Telegraph, 5 February 2015

<sup>79</sup> *Pedestrian crossing reinstalled following failed shared space attempt*, Grimsby Telegraph, 26 August 2015