

Accessibility Report Sandbach 2022



Based on feedback from participants of the informative first walk around Sandbach Town Centre on Friday 13th May 2022 and online zoom meeting 24th May.

Background

Local resident Debbie Bayley instigated this study as she had reported the difficulties, she had faced in pushing her late father around the town.

On Friday 13th May 2022, several members of the community with mobility issues who either use wheelchairs or mobility scooters were accompanied by Sandbach Town Councillors from Town Ward, Alan Smith, Ann Nevitt, John Beddows and Steve Kirkham plus Mike Benson and Laura Crane from Cheshire East Council. Laura Crane is the Vice Chair of Highways. We were also pleased to have along a lady who is registered blind and uses a cane.

The feedback from members of the public and support from the community with this exercise has been very positive and highlighted a number of areas of concern.

Each member of the public was accompanied by a town councillor to take notes of the difficulties faced accessing areas around the town.

The following is based on notes taken that night, at a subsequent online zoom meeting held on Tuesday 24th May with councillors and members of the public attending. A Facebook group that has been set up to include residents and councillors in Sandbach to encourage discussion of the issues faced.

<https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=accessibility%20sandbach>

Compiled by members of Accessibility Sandbach Facebook group with feedback received from the community consultation of 13th and 24th May 2022

Dropped kerbs

Recurring issues noted were the poor design and layout of dropped kerbs around the town.

- No clear and safe route e.g., dropped kerb on one side of the road nothing on the other.
- A number were in poor conditions with no obvious exit or route to be used.
- Kerbs are often quite high and cause issues for anyone using a small wheel scooter or in a wheelchair.
- Roads are in poor condition and often had potholes near to the pavements – a wheelchair or scooter user are unable to use dropped kerbs at such sites.
- Cars or vans are often parked across dropped kerbs restricting access.
- Tactile kerbs were often damaged or nonsensical meaning hard for people with limited vision and relying on tactile paving to get around.

Some examples are below:



Image from google maps.

“Wheatsheaf dropped kerb was useless as led to the middle of an inaccessible road on the other side. Issues noted circled in red. Dropped kerb on OMR makes it impassable. The road is in very poor condition with large potholes, some bollards and remains of bollards from the cycle lane still in situ. The images above do not show the ‘cycle lane’”



Image from google maps.

“Dropped curbs in front of shops that have no driveway access or crossing point at the other side of the road, (11 Highstreet and 13 High Street) are confusing, to visually impaired people. They can be confused with a crossing point. They also cause wheelchairs and scooters to tilt towards oncoming road traffic making the journey uncomfortable and more dangerous”.



Image from google maps.

“Crossing Hope Street was very difficult. Unable to see traffic coming when attempting to cross Hope Street on the right-hand side. also difficult with cars coming from the roundabout that may go onto Hope Street. Unsure what solution to this would be? make crossing more visible? Zebra crossing? Dropped kerbs were high and would cause issues for anyone in pain”

Compiled by members of Accessibility Sandbach Facebook group with feedback received from the community consultation of 13th and 24th May 2022



Image provided by group member

Entrance to the cobbles – broken stones on tactile paving.

“Parking spaces at road side difficult to find with a cane, you can end up walking in front of cars trying to park. When in use, this makes it difficult to walk from the cobbles pub to the Old Bear Restaurant”.

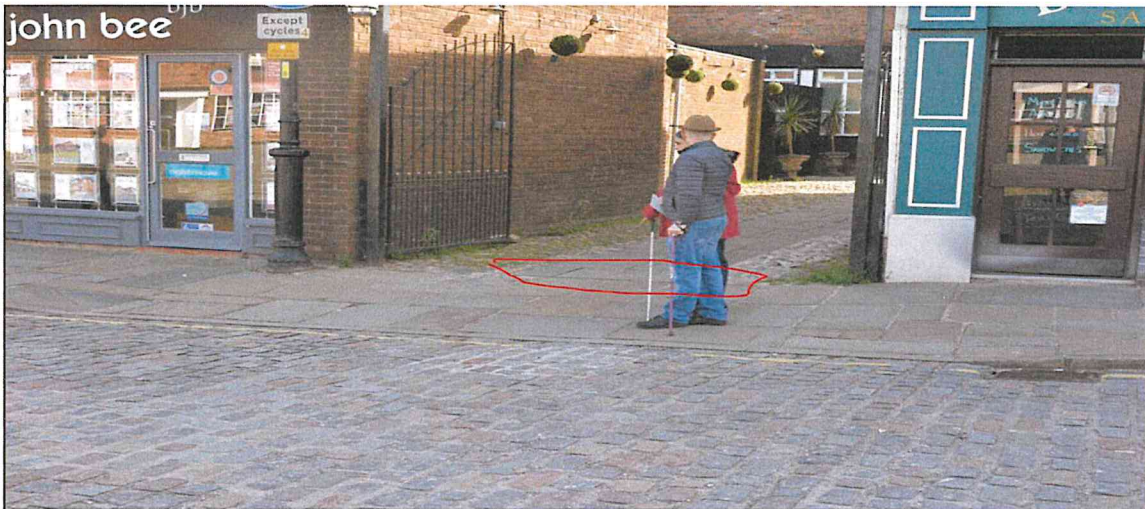


Image provided by group member

No tactile paving at entrance to the old Mill.



Image provided by group member

High street – no tactile paving on dropped kerb.



Image provided by group member

Uneven pavement Waitrose/ Flat Lane pedestrian crossing.



Image provided by group member

“At the Waitrose end of Georges walk the raised roadway to access Waitrose has no tactile markings. It is also at a 45-degree angle, this is dangerous as all cane users and guide dog users are taught to cross roads at right angles”.

High Cambers/ uneven pavements

Sandbach is an historic town and has been adapted and changed many times over the years. This has caused in some area's unsafe pavements with an unusually high camber.

- High camber on many pavements
- Poor quality paving with broken and raised pavements.
- Intrusive gulley's.

E.g.

Bradwell road – narrow pavement along area highlighted in image below. Steep if on low base scooter and very difficult for those pushing a wheelchair or pushchairs.

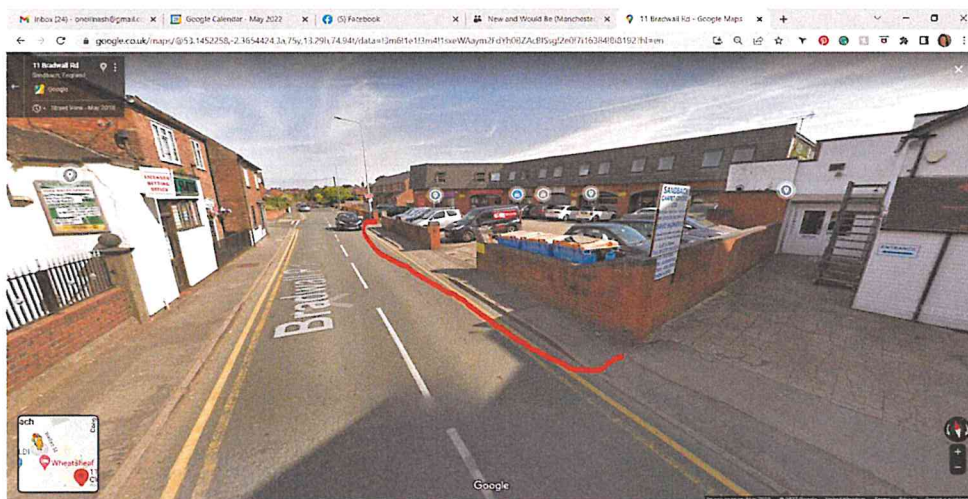


Image from google maps. Camber of pavement is so steep as to be unsafe for anyone on mobility scooter or in wheelchair. There are no obvious crossing places to avoid this is entering town on this side of the road.



Image from group member

Green street - Numerous comments about the inaccessibility of this road which is a major walking route into town via Malt Kiln way. Bins on pavements – especially the large commercial bins at the Congleton Road end. Uneven pavements, drain gully's that are deep and lack of drop kerbs. Similar issues on Welles Street.

Compiled by members of Accessibility Sandbach Facebook group with feedback received from the community consultation of 13th and 24th May 2022



Image from group member

Bold street uneven pavements.



Image from group member

Welles street – “Wells Street pavement out of Wells Street and onto pavement on main road pavement although relatively new is in very bad condition for anything on wheels Sandbach is a disgrace when it comes to footpaths for the Blind the Elderly People who aren’t very good on their legs people that have to use walkers and Wheelchair users especially those that are self-pushing or who have to be pushed Why should these people have to walk or be pushed a long way just to get to shops cafes and the such like just because the pavements are so bad”

Grids and Drain covers

A number of comments about loose and unsuitable grids throughout the town. An issue for those using white canes or walking sticks, wheelchair wheels could easily get stuck in them.

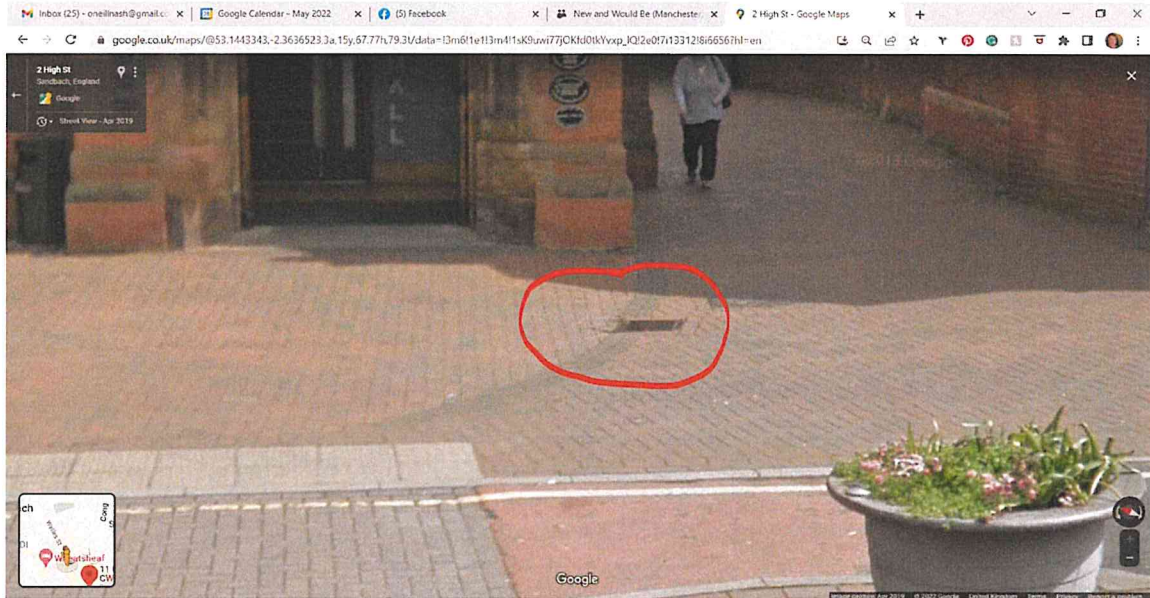


Image from google maps to show position.



Image from group member

High Street

“At edge of Warburton way in front of town hall there is a drain cover suitable for road site drainage in the middle of the pedestrianized zone. The holes in this cover are very wide and allow walking sticks, crutches, long canes for blind people and the wheels or wheelchairs to drop between the slits. This can cause ambulatory disabled to trip and fall and cause wheelchairs to get stuck”.

Compiled by members of Accessibility Sandbach Facebook group with feedback received from the community consultation of 13th and 24th May 2022

Inconsiderate parking

A number of comments were made about cars blocking dropped kerbs

This area on High Street in image below in particular opposite the betting shop.



The commons car park and surrounding has many cars that overhang into the pavement – an obstruction for all with limited mobility.



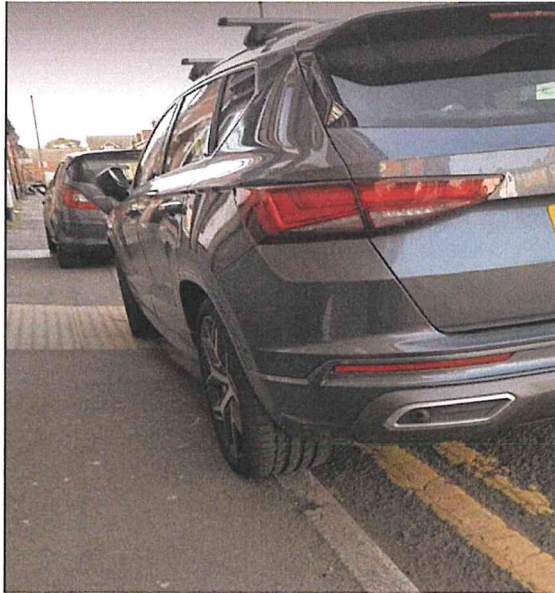


Image provided by group member

Inconsiderate parking on Welles Street covering dropped kerb and tactile paving.



Image provided by group member

Inconsiderate parking on High Street.

A Boards and bins on pavements

A number of comments about obstructions on the pavements. Welles street in particular has an abundance of 'A' boards and shop display items on an already narrow pavement.



Image by group member

A frame in middle of pavement on High Street.



Image from group member

Welles street obstructions on narrow uneven pavements. Note dropped kerb and tactile paving obstructed by stands.



Image from google maps.

Welles street - Numerous A boards and shop display on an already narrow and uneven pavement on one of the main walkways into town if coming from Bradwall road end via Malt Kiln Way.



Image from group member

Welles street - clutter on pavement.



Image from group member

Commercial bins permanently on corner of Green street.

"By Chinese restaurant lots of utility little and big lids higher than pavement not easy to get wheels over because of the way they are placed, Big ANSA bin in way on corner of Green Street just off main road and 3 ordinary wheelie bins have to go on road to get past then find a drop to get back on pavement,"



Image from group member

Hope street – numerous bins on poorly maintained pavement. These images were taken on a Friday evening – no refuse collections due over the weekend.



Image from group member

Hope street- large commercial bin and overgrown weeds/hedges blocking pavements.

Compiled by members of Accessibility Sandbach Facebook group with feedback received from the community consultation of 13th and 24th May 2022

Changing Facilities

A number of comments were made relating to appropriate changing facilities. Nearest to Sandbach currently are at Leighton hospital and Nantwich market.

There is funding available for this to enable Cheshire East to apply and install these needed facilities within Sandbach.

Following the outcome of the Round 1 assessment process the government has announced that 191 unitary and district councils across England have been allocated **£23.5 million** of funding to increase the number and spread of Changing Places Toilet facilities across England. 24 Mar 2022

<https://www.gov.uk> › ... › Building regulation

Changing Places Fund: allocation of funding following Round ... ✓

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/changing-places-fund-allocation-of-funding-following-round-1-assessment#:~:text=Following%20the%20outcome%20of%20the,Places%20Toilet%20facilities%20across%20England.>

<https://www.changing-places.org/local-authority-funding/ps30-million-investment-to-provide-changing-places-toilets>

Summary

Councils have a duty to make reasonable adjustments where they can. It is appreciated Sandbach is an historic market town and any adjustments have to be cost effective and reasonable to preserve the aesthetics of our beautiful town.

What's meant by the duty to make reasonable adjustments?

The **Equality Act 2010** says changes or adjustments should be made to ensure you can access the following things if you're disabled:

- education
- employment - ask your employer for adjustments
- housing - ask for adjustments in your home
- goods and services like shops, banks, cinemas, hospitals, council offices, leisure centres
- associations and private clubs like the Scouts and Guides, private golf clubs and working men clubs.

Above from the following link: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/law-and-courts/discrimination/what-are-the-different-types-of-discrimination/duty-to-make-reasonable-adjustments-for-disabled-people/>

Simple solutions

Simple solutions such as the following can be put into effect immediately:

- Inappropriate grids and drain covers can be changed for more appropriate and slimmer versions that don't present a hazard.
- Hedges trimmed back and weeds removed.
- Business A boards and clutter be removed and monitored
- Business and domestic bins relocated to more appropriate spaces. Domestic bins on Green and Welles Street are large and difficult for home owners to store in small yards. Smaller bins are available and supplied by councils for such issues.
- Improve inappropriate parking by ensuring wardens talk to the public and act appropriately if needed.
- Raising awareness via social media of the need to be considerate towards others. Most people aren't aware of what it is like to be in a wheelchair or use mobility aids. Raising awareness would help.

Longer term Solutions:

- Improve drop kerb design and locations.
- Improve levels of pavements.
- Improve untidy and hazardous open drains and guttering at street level.
- Install appropriate changing facilities.
- Remove visual blocks for safety.
- Install pedestrian crossings at crucial crossing places.

Further feedback and examples are included in the attached addendums of feedback. All authors and contributors have given written permission for these to be included in their original format

1. D Bailey feedback – also supplied some photographs included in the report.
2. Feedback Andrew and Sukhita Waugh – Taylor
3. Gmail feedback from Alan Smith and Jo Wilson
4. Gmail feedback from Laura Crane
5. Steve Kirkham comments
6. Email feedback from Helen O'Neill-Nash
7. Feedback from posts on FB group

Appendix 1

Feedback from Mrs Debbie Bailey

14 May 2022, 14:49 Debbie Debbie Bayley Drain for the rain by number49 really bad Really bad coming back down from new houses/ flats at top of Wells Street green street Cross street van parked on pavement just managed to get past probably struggle if I was self-pushing Wheelie bin in way by had to move it wouldn't have been able to if self-pushing Would have had to go back to nearest drop then go up the road Bad corner going into Green street cobbled path couldn't have done it if self-pushing would have to go back on to the road Most pavements paths and such like have very bad slants on them from gardens to road, really bad when pushing or self pushing for your shoulders This goes for walkers as well Very bad tarmac hump just before Oasis not sure if self pusher wouldn't have to go into the road to get over that, Like a fair ground ride well street top end very very uneven and dipping slabs and the such like No drop on left on Green street, Drop at number 62 so had to go back on ourselves to get to the other side of the road Drop to deep to drop down safely, lip on otherside of Green street left hand side to high for chair had to be tipped back a long way to get up it and that's scary, left hand side pretty good, Very tight squeeze past Wheelie bin and car a bigger chair would again have to have gone back on themselves to drop and go on road, The rain drainage furrows are terrible, if you don't catch it quite right you can be propelled foward out if your chair this is a problem on all the pavements we did, By Chinese restaurant lots of utility little and big lids higher than pavement not easy to get wheels over because of the way they are placed, Big ANSA bin in way on corner of Green Street just off main road and 3 ordinary wheelie bins have to go on road to get past then find a drop to get back on pavement, Drop by old road sign but again there is quite a big lip on it, Rest of Green street not to bad but not leave in all places Very uneven because of rain drainage furrows at number 18 just before corner of Cross Street Cross street not bad on one side but paving stones not good raised edges raised corners all not good for wheelchair users or people with walkers Wells Street pavement out of Wells Street and onto pavement on main road pavement although relatively new is in very bad condition for anything on wheels Sandbach is a disgrace when it comes to footpaths for the Blind the Elderly People who aren't very good on their legs people that have to use walkers and Wheelchair users especially those that are self pushing or who have to be pushed Why should these people have to walk or be pushed a long way just to get to shops cafes and the such like just because the pavements are so bad A lot of the shops aren't wheelchair friendly because of steps or lips that are just to high to get over.

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Appendix 2

Disability Access in Sandbach

Audit of Highstreet between Congleton road roundabout and the Old Manor, and Georges walk

High Street

At edge of Warbuton way in front of town hall there is a drain cover suitable for road site drainage in the middle of the pedestrianized zone. The holes in this cover are very wide and allow walking sticks, crutches, long canes for blind people and the wheels or wheelchairs to drop between the slits. This can cause ambulatory disabled to trip and fall and cause wheelchairs to get stuck.



Figure 1 Drain cover in shared space on Warbuton Way



Figure 2 Drain cover in shared surface on Warbuton Way
Long cane getting stuck

Outside the town hall the tactile markings either side the cycle lane are very worn and are difficult to feel through footwear or using long canes for the blind.

Finding the crossing point is difficult on market days as it is covered by market stalls and their vehicles.

As cycles can use the lane in both directions and are nearly silent, with on bells it is difficult for blind and partially sighted individuals to assess whether it is safe to cross the road. At least one formal pelican crossing is required on this road, one near the market hall where it will not be blocked by market vehicles. A second near Georges Walk.

Dropped curbs in front of shops that have no driveway access or crossing point at the other side of the road, are confusing, to visually impaired people. They can be confused with a crossing point. They also cause wheelchairs and scooters to tilt towards oncoming road traffic making the journey uncomfortable and more dangerous. A prime example on

Appendix 2

Highstreet is outside *Hotspot* (11 Highstreet and 13 High Street) which is opposite a disabled carparking space outside *WHSmiths*.



Figure 3 Tactile paving needed to indicate a hidden walkway

Tactile crossing point with raised road surface between *William Hill* (19-20 Highstreet) and the Black Bear Inn. The curb surface is totally flush with the roads surface and the tactile surface is very worn, almost smooth in places. This makes it very difficult to find using a long cane. A blind person using a long cane could have the cane driven over by a cyclist or one of the near silent electric vehicles that now populate Sandbach roads.

Street furniture such as shot sign boards need to remain as close to the shop walls as possible, they are a complete hazard to movement for guide dog and other assistance dog users, and people using scooters and wheelchairs where they reduce the available walkway to less than one meter.

There is no visibility of pavement from alley between *Icelands* (33 Highstreet) and *The Cod Father* (31 Highstreet). Pedestrians, scooter users and cyclists come out of this alley at speed. Tactile markings in the pavement across the entrance and across the pavement either side of the entrance would warn visually impaired people that this alley exists and to slow down in case someone is coming out at speed.



Figure 4 Confusing dropped curve outside *WhSmiths*

Appendix 2

Tactile crossing point with raised road surface between outside *Iceland's* (33 Highstreet). The curb surface is totally flush with the roads surface and the tactile surface is very worn, almost smooth in places. This makes it very difficult to find using a long cane. A blind person using a long cane could have the cane driven over by a cyclist or one of the near silent electric vehicles that now populate Sandbach roads.

No tactile indication of edges of access road between *Piste Restaurant* (45 Highstreet) and *Heart Tree* (43 Highstreet).

Curb next to 59 is almost level with road surface so tactile required.

Tactile required outside Old Manor carpark. If reduction of carpark to half its original width is permanent then the pavement should stop at the entrance.

Again no crossing points at Middlewich road end of High Street.



Figure 5 Street Furniture



Georges Walk

Although Georges walk is un adopted it is used by many pedestrians and is a good example of pour street layout. Tactile paving needed outside Iceland to indicate driveway. Especially as visibility for drivers coming out od carpark is low. Tactile paving also needed halfway across to indicate the bottom of the pedestrian walkway Georges Walk.

Appendix 2

There is no tactile indication between the Icelands driveway and Georges walk until you get level with the Georges garden. Totally blind people could easily find themselves walking into the driveway in error.

It is not possible to use the wall of the Georges pub as a shoreline when walking with a long cane as there are tables and chairs in the pavement. This means that for totally blind cane users there is no route up Georges walk that will enable them to use any of the businesses on Georges walk.

At the Waitrose end of Georges walk the raised roadway to access Waitrose has no tactile markings. It is also at a 45-degree angle, this is dangerous as all cane users and guide dog users are taught to cross roads at right angles.



Figure 6 angles footpath near Waitrose end of Georges Walk

The Cobbles

Parking spaces at road side difficult to find with a cane, you can end up walking in front of cars trying to park. When in use, this makes it difficult to walk from the cobbles pub to the Old Bear Restaurant.



Figure 7 damaged tactile paving near DV8 Restaurant.

Appendix 2

Benches around the memorial and the carpark means that the only reliable crossing route for blind people is to walk to the post office sorting office, cross in front of the "Old Crosses" and negotiate all the tables and chairs blocking the pavement in front of all the cafes and restaurants.

The cobbles themselves although very historic are a major hazard for all people with disabilities. Wheelchair front casters are small and get stuck between cobbles jarring the person using the chair. This also happens to many types of mobility scooter.

Walking sticks and crutches slip on the cobbles making them a trip hazard. Long canes used by the totally blind get jammed on the cobbles.

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Appendix 3

Powerchair User Observations from Journeys in Sandbach

A General Observations from Joe Wilson Powerchair User

B Route Based Observations in Sandbach Friday 13th May 2022:

Jo Wilson (Powerchair User) and Alan Smith

A General Observations from Joe Wilson, Powerchair User

1. Position of A boards outside of shop fronts is a general problem.
2. Permanent bins on pavements can sometimes restrict access for powerchair users
3. Problem of cars parked across dropped kerbs
4. Tatton and Gasworth Drive tree roots raised tarmac
5. New flags uneven causing buggy tyre punctures
6. Position of button on crossing posts

B Route Based Observations from Joe Wilson, Powerchair User and Alan Smith

Route: Starting at Sandbach Town Hall

Journey 1

Cross at the at the town hall pedestrian crossing then on to Welles Street. Cross at Welles Street past the Swan and Chequer, past Lloyds Bank and the Literary Institute and then up Bradwell crossing Bold Street. Proceeded up Bradwall Road towards Bradwall on the right hand pavement. Cross about half way to the left hand pavement and proceed to the Elworth Street and stopped at the junction to Platt Avenue.

Observations

1. There were drop kerbs all the way on this route.
2. The pedestrian crossing button on the other side of the road from the Town Hall was hard to get for a powerchair user (figure 1)
3. To cross the road at Bradwell was hard for both Powerchair User and walker. Possible crossing site?

Appendix 3



Fig1: Pedestrian Crossing Button at the pedestrian cross the other side of the road from the Town Hall

Journey 2: From junction of Platt Avenue with Elworth Road to Middlewich Road crossing

Proceeded back down Bradwall Road and then turned into Chapel Street. Cross Copenhall Way and ending up at the crossing by Ashfields. Then cross Middlewich Road onto a triangular island. Then cross Ashfield Way and up towards the surgery.

Observations

1. There were drop kerbs all the way on this route.
2. First pedestrian crossing button on the Middlewich Road was hard to push for a powerchair user (Figure 2)
3. The triangular island pedestrian crossing does not give an audible beeping sound when it is safe to cross.
4. There does not appear to be a time that you can cross from one side to the other in a single go.
5. There was a sign that has lain flat for weeks on the pavement as you proceed up Ashfield Way towards the surgery (figure 4).

Appendix 3



Fig 2: First Pedestrian crossing button on Middlewich Road



Fig 3: Pedestrian crossing button on the triangular island



Fig 4: Sign been on the floor for weeks

Appendix 3

Journey 3: From Ashfields Surgery past Aldi and across the Middlewich Road Crossing returning to the Town Hall

From the surgery past Aldi and crossed the pedestrian crossing into Old Middlewich Road turn into Hightown and then cross Bradwell Road. Then past the Sandbach Literary Institute then cross Hightown to the island and onto the other side of Hightown. Proceed down High Town to cross the High Street ending back at the Town Hall.

Observations

1. There were drop kerbs all the way on this route.
2. Relied on considerate motorists to get across Bradwell Road and Hightown.



Appendix 4
Helen O'Neill-Nash [redacted]

Fwd: Accessibility walk report

1 message

ann.nevitt@btinternet.com [redacted]
To: [redacted]

31 May 2022 at 18:59

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Laura Crane <Laura.Crane@sandbach.gov.uk>
Date: 30 May 2022 08:39
Subject: Accessibility walk report
To: Ann Nevitt <Ann.Nevitt@sandbach.gov.uk>, Ann Nevitt [redacted]
Cc:

Hi Ann,

I've copied in your personal email as well as council given the issues you've been having.

These are the notes I made. Unfortunately photos don't seem to be working.

Kind regards
Laura

The Cobbled square.

The cobbles themselves are virtually impassable with manual wheelchairs. Wheels get caught and it's extremely hard work for those pushing.

Tables and chairs regularly block the pavement area on the side next to the Cafe on the Square and Casa Mia.

This area is still not as flat as needed for manual wheelchairs as there are ruts and bumps that make it tricky to navigate.

We then walked down Warm walls between DV8 & Cafe on the Square. There are many broken paving slats along this stretch which make it difficult to use. This is a very useful cut through to reduce walking distances so improvement would be really helpful.

The Commons

There is no dropped kerb further down the road from Penda way towards Well bank so if you want to get to the Masonic you must take the long route round Congleton road or head across the carpark.

There are no textiled slabs at the dropped kerb that does exist near to the bus stop on the Commons.

When you cross to the Scotch common carpark there is a dropped kerb onto the carpark but cars regularly park across it. This could be easily resolved with hatched markings.

Hawk street

We headed this way and back towards the cobbles. There is no accessible route from Hawk street to the Cobbles. You have to push across the cobbled street or walk the long way round - Well bank then Crown bank which is quite a steep route.

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6/1/22, 9:15 AM

Gmail - Fwd: Accessibility walk report

Town Council Privacy notice can be found here: <http://sandbach.gov.uk/general-privacy-notice.htm>

Appendix 4

Appendix 5

General Notes

In order to start this survey with some insight into what issues might arise, I spoke briefly with those volunteers who were not assigned to me. In particular I was interested in what challenges sight impaired users might experience, particularly if this was accompanied by a mobility problem as well. Some of the points made were as follows.

1. Often the tactile strip is either not present or points in the wrong direction - the sight impaired (SIU) user often will use the orientation as a guide to the path to be followed.
2. Crossings are often in a place where the road user has a compromised view of the crossing user.
3. Crossings need to be of the Pelican type, so that the sight impaired know when it is safe to cross. It is not helpful that council vehicles have a reversing buzzer which has a similar sound.
4. Parking close to crossing points limit the view for both the vehicle operator and the person attempting to cross.

Market Hall to Swan and Chequers - Here the crossing point implied by the traffic refuge has poor visibility for vehicle operators of those attempting to cross as well as the user, also there is no dropped curb for the refuge itself making its use impossible for wheelchair (WCU) users.

Raised Pelican Crossing from Market Hall to Blackfriars Insurance Office - The Pelican Crossing here is good, with a wide tactile strip, easy access to the buttons and a clear view of traffic/user. The dropped curb can make it difficult to know where the kerb ends and the road begins but, is essential for WCUs.

Access Road to Small Commons - This received much critical comment. The lack of a tactile strip meant the SIU has no warning of the road and the common presence of parked vehicles created difficulty seeing traffic for the WCUs and poor visibility of the WCU & SIU for vehicle operators. The parking area is avoided by WCU & SIUs for the same reason. On the other side of the access road, the bollard is in the wrong position to access the pavement - which curves in at this point - and the access using the car park is not protected and often a vehicle is parked there.

Crossing to Scots Common by Bus Stop - This is well positioned, with the pavement extending to permit a view down the road past the bus and dropped curbs on both sides however, there is no means of stopping traffic for the SIU. On the Scots Common side there is no dropped curb into the car park itself at the same point, the WCU must travel 10m to the right where the dropped curb access is typically blocked by a parked vehicle. It should be noted that WCUs feel particularly vulnerable in the car park as they are almost invisible to those seeking a parking place. As the pavement runs alongside the Scots Common opposite the Military Arms, the width is often reduced by vehicles overhanging the pavement from their parking spot. This is a significant hazard for SIUs and an obstruction for WCUs and pedestrians alike. Vehicles often block access to the dropped kerb from the car park.

Small Roundabout near to Fire Station - The crossing points across to the Military Arms side and to the Fire Station (FS) side are too close to the roundabout itself, allowing little time for both the user and the vehicle operator to see each other's intentions. There are no tactile strips in front of the FS or the Library at this point and because the kerb crossing the FS access road is not dropped adequately WCUs feel obliged to take to the highway itself. The tactile strip in front of the library is somewhat further down, where there is a dropped curb island refuge for car park access but, as explained previously, WCUs & SIUs are actively avoiding the car park because of the perceived danger. Thought must be given to how a protected pathway can be provided so WCUs & SIUs can access the library facilities from the town centre safely.

Emergency Vehicle (EV) Access Road by Valet Centre - No tactile strips and an impassable dropped curb here.

Hackney Yard junction - poor dropped curb, which is also misaligned with the other side, misdirecting the SIU.

Appendix 5

Pavement to Tatton Drive - often rough due to tree root damage, although the crossing is satisfactory. There is no crossing point on the Congleton road between the small roundabout and the Pelican Crossing near the Day Care nursery, leaving WCUs to take a long diversion or take their chances. The Pelican Crossing has quite a steep gradient, which might cause issues in winter.

Offley Road/Congleton Road junction - this only has a refuge area and is further impaired by poor visibility- frankly an accident waiting to happen.

Crossing Congleton Road and heading back to town - the pavement here is often narrow, made worse due to poor hedge maintenance and very rough in places - a significant hazard for those scooters with a narrow track, which can easily tip over. Vehicles often can be seen to overhang the pavement from the front of houses

New field Road crossing point - no tactile strips and road rough.

Commons Mill crossing - no tactile strip and the dropped curb directs the SIU into the main carriageway, not across the side road.

No WCU access to Military Arms

No tactile strips by "Home"

Shops along Congleton Road, even national brands, have a raised lip for entry.

Green Street crossing - no tactile strips & rough paving

Welles Street crossing - vehicle speed from roundabout

A comment was also made about the crossing point further along in Welles Street being masked parked vehicles.

Many thanks to Jim and Remmy for their help in compiling this, any omissions or inaccuracies are down to me.

Appendix 6

[OFFICIAL] RE: Town Centre Walkabout

accessibility sandbach

From: Helen O'Neill-Nash

Sent: 16 May 2022 16:43

To: XXXX

Cc: Ann Nevitt <

Subject: Re: [OFFICIAL] FW: Town Centre Walkabout

Dear XXXX

Many thanks for your comments. It has become very clear to me from the initial feedback that comments should be from people with disabilities first and foremost. Somebody who is able-bodied focuses only on certain areas such as dropped kerbs, it is much more than that as I have discovered.

I have added my comments to yours in blue below and cc'd Ann in as chatted to her about my thoughts.

I am sure there are many more issues that others will point out - the small roundabout at Bradwall road being one, hedges not cut as well caused difficulties.

I suggest accessing shops and pubs should be the next experiment. Below may be useful to consider.

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/law-and-courts/discrimination/what-are-the-different-types-of-discrimination/duty-to-make-reasonable-adjustments-for-disabled-people/>

Kind Regards

Helen O'Neill-Nash

On Sun, 15 May 2022 at 17:44, <

xxxx wrote:

Dear Helen,

These are my preliminary thoughts from our walkabout. Would welcome your thoughts before I send To Ann Nevitt who is collating responses.

Best wishes,

xxxx

Appendix 6

--Original Message-----

From: xxxx

Sent: 14 May 2022 10:46

To: xxxx

Subject: Town Centre Walkabout

Here are a few notes from my walkabout with Helen.

Walk: Town Hall to Wheatsheaf, across into Old Middlewich Road, across Middlewich Rd to Aldi and Ashfield car parks, then across Middlewich Road into Chapel Street and back along Bradwall Road.

- Crossing over from town hall. Bollard circled in red below blocks oncoming traffic from viewing anyone in a wheelchair or scooter.



We encountered quite a few dropped kerbs with tactile paving though even these have a small drop which requires careful approach.



- Wheatsheaf dropped kerb was useless as led to the middle of an inaccessible road on the other side. Dropped kerb on OMR makes it impassable. The road is in very poor condition with large potholes, some bollards and

Appendix 6

remains of bollards from the cycle lane still in situ. The images above do not show the 'cycle lane'.



The time of 5pm on Friday afternoon is probably not a first choice for visiting the town centre but drivers were courteous and allowed us to cross.

- For me, 5pm is an ideal time for such an exercise as shows the real difficulties. Traffic stopped because I had two able bodied people on either side of me who were visible and put a hand up to stop traffic. If I had been on my own in a scooter, I doubt if I would have been seen or acknowledged. Anyone should be able to access the town at any time.

If a disabled person is not familiar with the route it is not immediately obvious where the dropped kerbs are, so it takes time to work out the best and most accessible route. Helen has only recently been using a mobility scooter so is finding out the pitfalls.

- We were unable to easily follow any sensible route, especially towards the glasshouse and across towards Aldi. We were unable to cross from the Wheatsheaf to Middlewich road we had to return to the island further up. The dropped kerbs have been put in place without considering how disabled people need to access the town.

Corner of Hope St, this need better dropped kerbs.

Crossing Hope street was very difficult. Unable to see traffic coming when attempting to cross Hope street on the right-hand side. also difficult with cars coming from the roundabout that may go onto Hope street. Unsure what solution to this would be? make crossing more visible? Zebra crossing? Dropped kerbs were high and would cause issues for anyone in pain

Appendix 6



Crossing from The Glasshouse to Red Dot is difficult and there are many potholes on the road making any crossing quite hazardous. If these were improved it would make it easier.

In Old Middlewich Road, the access road to the Balti needs better dropped kerbs, the existing ones are quite pronounced. There are quite a few potholes in OMRd.

Agree, condition of OMR is appalling with a dropped kerb on the corner high. then high camber onto the other side. crossing the car park below IF anyone in a wheelchair was using that side of the road it is again very poor due to the condition of the road.



Often dropped kerbs were not in alignment ie one on Middlewich road on the right side near the roundabout did not have an exit one opposite. near to the bus stop.



Appendix 6

- Open gulleys on the pavement are deep and troublesome in a wheelchair or scooter. They have to be crossed as they continue along the width of the pavement. There was also a car parked on the pavement at the time we went down here.



- The entrance to Aldi from the crossing is very steep. Ok if in a scooter but difficult for anyone pushing a wheelchair.



Appendix 6

In the Aldi car park/Ashfields. There are good flat areas around Aldi itself and the car park is busy making it difficult at any time.

At Ashfields, there is a pair of dropped kerbs at the end of the building but to follow the pavement leads to the main entrance to the Aldi car park where there are no dropped kerbs. Users would have to cross the road to the staff and patients car park to get to McDonalds.



- Dropped kerb near Macdonald's, but no dropped kerb that I can see to access this pavement from the Aldi side. Also, note raised kerbs next to disability parking.

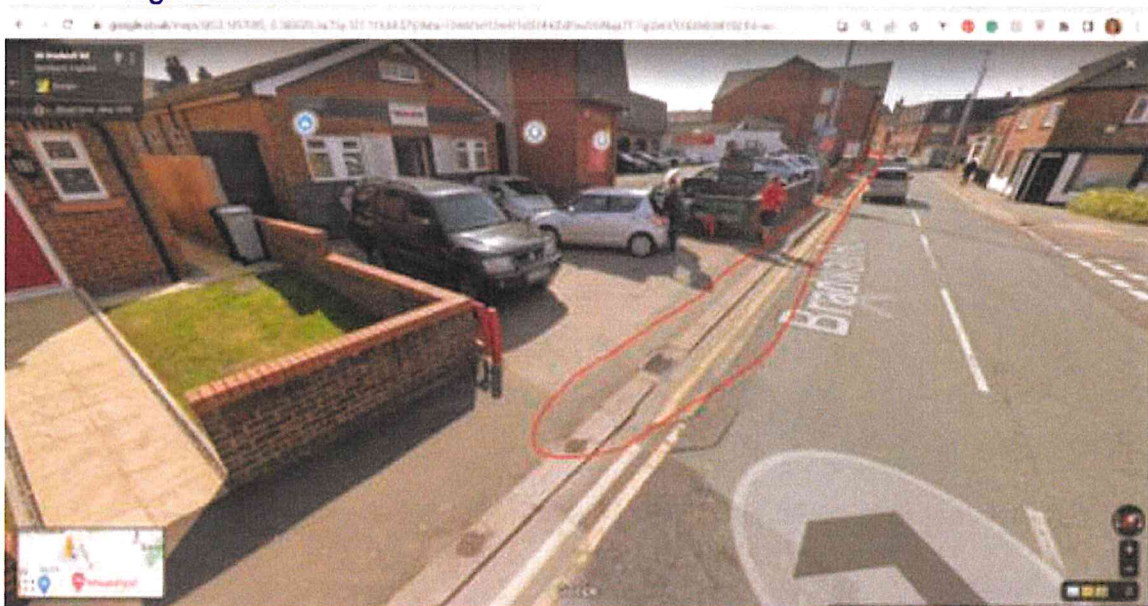


Appendix 6

- Access from traffic lights meant high camber again and unstable surface in the area below.



- This area in particular is very difficult to navigate as narrow pavements and high camber.



Appendix 6

- Later we went down the main street to the cobbles, noticing there are no dropped kerbs where the disabled parking is. Accessing in and out of a car would be difficult having to account for a higher kerb that is there. This should be flat and level with the road.



Overall, my impression is that making progress in a wheelchair or using a mobility scooter is a challenge at such a busy time. Even when the town is quiet, the pavements and road surfaces make crossing roads difficult. There are quite a few dropped kerbs which is good, though a few more would be helpful.

- An eye-opener how difficult it is in the main to get around the roads and pavements in town. It is important to use the views of those with disabilities, even if temporary, first and foremost. An able-bodied person's point of view does not see the struggles of those with disabilities.

Hope this helps

[OFFICIAL] RE: Town Centre Walkabout
accessibility sandbach

Tue, 17 May,
16:21 (2 days
ago)

to me, Ann

Dear Helen,

I am happy that your comments are included in Ann's Report to the Town Council.

Many thanks,

XXXX

Appendix 6

Helen O'Neill-Nash [REDACTED]

Tue, 17 May, 17:33
(2 days ago)

to xxxx, Ann

Dear xxxx

I assumed taking part, mine and other contributors' comments would all be added to the report. We weren't made aware that our comments would be selected for approval.

The most important contributors of the project are those with disabilities, not able-bodied people's views.

I would be disappointed and concerned if any of those who volunteered their time for the exercise had their comments edited in any way or required an able-bodied persons approval to be included.

Kind Regards

Helen O'Neil-Nash

BLANK

PAGE

Appendix 7



Accessibility Sandbach



S [redacted]

Helen, thank you for raising the problem on bradwell road near Offley road. I am told by those with working eyes, that these hedges make me invisible to traffic. This means I can no longer go in to town using the route I have used for years. The alternative route is no better. The only useful landmarks are drain covers and the counting of driveways. These are hard to find, and are not reliable landmarks. With a cane the route in to town is 3 times as long.




Trimming a few hedges would give me my independence back.

As a blind person, I need crossings to have tactile paving, and a curb to be able to find. Without this, it is easy to veer in to a junction, or in to the middle of the road. As I did not cover this part of sandbach, I am adding my comments here.

Love Reply 1 w



Appendix 7

 **Helen O'Neill Nash** updated the description.
Admin  · 17 May at 11:17 · 


a group for those in the fabulous town of Sandbach wanting to change and improve accessibility for all.

 4

10 comments Seen by 24

 Like

 Comment

 Send

All comments ▼



B [redacted]
Would love to help any way that I can. Would love to see a changing places toilet in our town. There is literally nowhere to change a child/adult in Sandbach unless your under the age of about two. I find this so sad everyone needs to use the toilet and having a dignified way to do this for everyone would be amazing. Would also love to see some of the shops with steps become more accessible even if it's just ramps that can be brought out and taken back in.

Like Reply 1 w Edited

 3



Helen O'Neill Nash Author Admin +1

B [redacted] about the changing facilities. I support families with children with additional needs. there has been a lot of campaigns to improve changing places throughout the uk.

Like Reply 1 w

 2



Accessibility Sandbach

there has been a lot of campaigns to improve changing places throughout the uk.

Like Reply 1 w

 2



B [redacted]
Helen O'Neill Nash I have a 7 year old son with Duchenne muscular dystrophy. He uses a wheelchair most of the time. We can currently just about use a normal toilet with help but as his condition progress this will not be the case. This will severely hi... See more

Care Reply 1 w



Helen O'Neill Nash Author Admin +1

B [redacted] absolutely. Inclusion, independence and dignity is very important..

Like Reply 1 w

  2

Appendix 7

Be [redacted] absolutely. Inclusion, independence and dignity is very important..

Like Reply 1 w 2



L [redacted]
Helen O'Neill Nash | second Becci's comment re: changing places.

When speaking to Kieran Mullen recently on this (I realise he's not Sandbach) he suggested the disabled toilets would be fine for my daughter. I asked if he would like to lie on the floor in there....

For events (such as the transport festival) vans with changing place facilities can be hired. 😊

Like Reply 1 w 3



Helen O'Neill Nash Author Admin +1
L [redacted] I am appalled that lying on the floor was deemed an appropriate response. A useful website is below. They campaign for more accessible toilets. Maybe this is something that needs, mentioning to STC?
<https://www.changing-places.org/> ✓



CHANGING-PLACES.ORG
Changing Places Toilets

Like Reply Remove Preview 1 w



L [redacted]
Helen O'Neill Nash unfortunately it's always seen as too expensive for a small minority rather than the way it actually is - accessible for all. 😞😞😞

Sad Reply 1 w Edited



Helen O'Neill Nash Author Admin +1
L [redacted] it is wrong isn't it 😞 Reasonable adjustments should be made according to the Equality Act 2010. worth joining the campaign to improve the situation.

Like Reply 1 w




Be [redacted]
L [redacted] I've asked before several times to. An was also told the disabled toilet was adequate. I will not be laying my child on the floor either! (It's been a while since I last looked into this but defo happy to try look at this further with others)







Like Reply 1 w



Appendix 7


Like Reply 1 w







 B [redacted]
L [redacted] I've asked before several times to. An was also told the disabled toilet was adequate. I will not be laying my child on the floor either! (It's been a while since I last looked into this but defo happy to try look at this further with others) ...







Like Reply 1 w

 Reply to Helen O'Neill Nas...     

 Ann Nevitt 
B [redacted] this will also be brought up in the report. ...


Like Reply 1 w  2


 Reply to Becci Stafford...     

 Write a comment...     





Accessibility Sandbach



 L [redacted]
Are there any minutes/ notes from Friday?
Was it a meeting or a get together? ...


Sorry. Bit late to the party so catching up. 

Like Reply 1 w

 Helen O'Neill Nash Author Admin +1
L [redacted] happy to share my comments and feedback to give you an idea..Will be tomorrow before I can post them in here though. ...

Like Reply 1 w  2

 Ann Nevitt 
L [redacted] It was a walk about around the town to check on the accessibility problems for the disabled. All participants were asked to make notes and we will then have a zoom meeting and write a report to put before the Council. You are welcome to join the Zoom, the joining data will be on this site. ...

Like Reply 1 w 

Appendix 7

disabled. All participants were asked to make notes and we will then have a zoom meeting and write a report to put before the Council. You are welcome to join the Zoom, the joining data will be on this site.

Like Reply 1 w



L [redacted]

Ann Nevitt thank you. It will be interesting to see what different people have identified.

For us - once we get into a shop/ cafe etc. we can't then get round it 😞
Disabled toilets up steps etc.

The town hall is great with the lift but disabled acts struggle to get on stage.

I realise in an old town certain things are the way they are, but good to make improvements where possible.

Like Reply 1 w



Ann Nevitt

L [redacted] Thank you for your comments, please join the Zoom meeting,

Like Reply 1 w



Helen O'Neill Nash Author Admin +1

L [redacted] have posted my feedback email thread as promised. x

thread as promised. x

Like Reply 1 w



Reply to Liz Cockram...



Ann Nevitt

We have every intention of taking the views of the disabled people of the town and giving them a voice as to how they see the town. It will be seen from their view and most certainly not the view of able bodied people. We are holding a zoom meeting on Tuesday night at 7.30 to discuss what actually gets sent to STC and then onto CEC. and will be based on the feed back from the disabled. Join the meeting if you are interested.

Love Reply 1 w



Helen O'Neill Nash Author Admin +1

Ann Nevitt brilliant idea. Would you like me to share the link In here as an event?

Like Reply 1 w



Ann Nevitt

Helen O'Neill Nash That would be brill if you could, Laura Crane is hosting the zoom as me and techi are aliens to each other. I just think whoever hosts will have the support of all the participants and we can get moving forward. We are a team not a group of individuals as I keep on stressing.

Appendix 7

keep on stressing.

Love Reply 1 w



Helen O'Neill Nash Author Admin +1

Ann Nevitt will ask Laura if she is happy for me to share the link and sort it tomorrow. I agree with you. Including and giving everyone a voice is the most important thing. X

Like Reply 1 w



Helen O'Neill Nash Author Admin +1

Ann Nevitt Laura Crane are you happy for me to post your zoom link in this group?

Like Reply 1 w



Ann Nevitt 🙌

Helen O'Neill Nash i certainly am. ...

Love Reply 1 w



B [redacted] 🙌



Helen O'Neill Nash I would like to part take on the zoom call to if possible. Another thing I would absolutely love to see is a more accessible park for children. Even if it's fundraised if no funding I'm sure it's something people could get behind.

Like Reply 1 w




Helen O'Neill Nash Author Admin +1

Appendix 7

 **B** 



Helen O'Neill Nash I would like to part take on the zoom call to if possible. Another thing I would absolutely love to see is a more accessible park for children. Even if it's fundraised if no funding I'm sure it's something people could get behind.

Like Reply 1 w

 **Helen O'Neill Nash** Author Admin +1

Laura has replied. Not being brilliant technical person, I was unsure if I could share Laura's original invite. But now I can 😊

Like Reply 1 w

 **Ann Nevitt** 

Helen O'Neill Nash Brill, still feeling a bit shaky.

Like Reply 1 w

 Reply to Helen O'Neill Nas...     

 Reply to Ann Nevitt...     

 Write a comment...     

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