

Transport

I agree with encouraging a policy to encourage cycling and making it safer however the transport policy seems to have a bias towards increasing cycling through the city center.

As member of the "Durham City Access for all " I am against this when it involves shared footpath use.

There is a law dating back to 1835 making it an offense to ride on pavements this was amended in 1999 making it a fixed penalty offense. It was obviously thought a danger in 1835 and like many others I think it is still is today. The Highway Code Rule 64 states you must not cycle on a pavement.

The idea of say Silver Street being made a mixed use for pedestrians and cyclists I think is dangerous. We have an ever increasing aging population whose reactions are getting slower. By making cycling legal on some pavements I feel that some cyclists will then think they have the right to ride on all pavements. There is signage at both ends of the street saying cyclist dismount but I see this being ignored on a regular basis.

The group represent disabled people with impaired mobility ,wheelchair users, and those with sight and hearing problems as well as the general public.

For example Guide dogs are trained to walk down the center of the footpath. One of our group has a Guide dog. His dog gets confused and worried by cyclists on pavements. This happened recently on the mixed use pavement at the North Durham Hospital. Cyclists might feel in danger on the roads but what about the pedestrians who feel in danger of cyclists on the pavement.

When the Market place was refurbished it was to encourage pedestrians. There are no kerbs on some parts of Saddler street for example. Guide dogs are trained to stop at the kerb and we are all taught from childhood road safety to stop at the kerb and look both ways.

Visitors to the City assume this is a pedestrian only zone and get confused and startled when confronted by cars and buses and cyclists using this area.

Prior to it being refurbished we asked for a smoother surface on Silver Street this was ignored. We ended up with a mixture of finishes.

Most pedestrians prefer to use the York stone paved edges or the two narrow smooth sections as it is much easier to walk on these than the undulating cobble stones. Wheelchair and mobility scooter users in particular find the surface difficult. The smooth bits are too narrow for a wheel chair and mobility scooters and the paved edges

are cluttered with advertising boards abandoned bicycles, buskers tables and chairs etc.

Wheelchair users as well as those using pushchairs are therefore forced to use the cobbled sections and get a very rough ride. For those with bad backs in particular this exacerbates their problems making it a no go area for some.

Access to Buildings

Making places or buildings accessible to all makes life easier for everyone. You just have to look at how many customers use the automatic doors at Marks and Spencers compared to those using the other doors. It helps the mother pushing a pram or someone with both hands full of shopping as well as the disabled.

It is important with new builds and refurbishments for the plans to be checked by a qualified access consultant rather than an architect who thinks he knows. After the work is completed it is difficult and expensive to rectify mistakes.

Disabled Parking.

The group has regular issues about the lack of disabled parking in the City. Disabled parking was removed from the market place when it was refurbished and has not been replaced elsewhere.

For those wishing to worship or visit the Cathedral there are only a few disabled places at the rear of the Cathedral and these are often occupied by skips.

Parking at the Palace Green is impossible. The University/Cathedral seem unwilling to help sort it out.