

# Making Stirling a Dementia Friendly City

A Citizen-led  
Places and Spaces  
Project



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# Making Stirling a Dementia Friendly City

## Background

This report and the project that underpins it was funded by Stirling Council as part of the implementation phase of the *Dementia Friendly Stirling Action Plan (2018-2021)*.

It contributes to the commitment by Stirling Council, as part of the Dementia Friendly Stirling Group, to develop sustainable Dementia Friendly communities across the Stirling Council area.

The project aims to reflect the five following objectives under themes identified by the *Dementia Friendly Stirling* group of local organisations:

## People:

*'To develop an understanding of what matters to people with dementia and their carers and consider options for co-production'.*

## Places / Environment:

*'To develop opportunities for those living with dementia to access safe spaces in their communities by making the physical environment, public places and related information more accessible to people with dementia'.*

## Awareness Raising:

*'To increase awareness across communities and within partner organisations'.*

## Activities:

*'To support people with dementia and their cares to have full, positive lives within supported communities; with a focus on health and well-being'.*

## Transport:

*'To understand the barriers to accessibility in relation to transport for people with dementia and their carers'.*

(Source: Project Brief)



# Places, Environment, and Transport

## The Project

Three workstreams are identified in the Dementia Friendly Stirling action plan:

1. *'Awareness Raising'*
2. *'People and Activities'*
3. *'Places, Environment, and Transport'*

The current project is part of the *'Places, Environment, and Transport'* workstream which aims to improve the accessibility of Stirling City Centre for residents, workers and visitors – especially older adults, those living with dementia, and their carers.

## Environmental Audit: Project Brief

Through environmental audits, the *'Places, Environment, and Transport'* work stream aims to identify and prioritise a range of environmental improvements for public buildings, streets, and spaces – improving the experiences of residents and visitors alike. It is intended that some prioritised improvements will be implemented as a follow up with specific council funding already in place to undertake this work. It is anticipated that recommendations from this project will inform the council's wider programme of capital works, influencing both the design and consultation process for major projects such as those to be funded by the City Region Deal.

The formal brief for environment audits included the following:

- *To undertake environmental audits of public buildings, spaces and routes between them*
- *To recognise existing Dementia Friendly infrastructure*
- *To identify areas for improvement*
- *To consult with key citizen groups: older adults, people with dementia, and their carers*
- *To complete a report with recommendations - for improvements to physical environments, and approaches to co-production and stakeholder engagement*

(Source: Project Brief)



# Dementia Centred Empowerment

This project was led by the Dementia Services Development Centre at the University of Stirling and undertaken by a team of local community volunteers, carers, and people living with dementia – all residents of Stirling - supported by professional and academic staff from third sector organisations; Artlink Central, Alzheimer's Scotland, and the University of Stirling. All three organisations are partners in the on-going Stirling-based dementia friendly communities development project *Our Connected Neighbourhoods (OCN)*.

Extending the values of OCN (see following page) people living with dementia and their unpaid carers have been an integral part of the project. Supported by the professional project team members this group of local citizens designed, directed, and undertook a program of workshops and environmental audit walks in their own Town Centre. This document reports on the processes and outcomes of the groups work. Organizing the project in this way upends conventional approaches to community consultation and gives the citizen participants a meaningful say in how their city and community is shaped.

The *Citizen Audit Team* for this project included people who contribute to the *Our Connected Neighbourhoods* project, bringing with them valuable skills in community research, and lived experience of dementia, either as a person living with dementia, or as the unpaid carer of someone living with dementia.

As the result project the team built considerable experience in developing and shaping how these audits can work, as they supported each other to try, test, and refine assessment tools and methods throughout. The outcomes of this project help take dementia inclusive community creation forward in bold new directions.



Team members at project scoping session

# Our Connected Neighbourhoods

*Our Connected Neighbourhoods* (OCN) is an ongoing Stirling-based dementia friendly communities development project funded by the Life Changes Trust. OCN ethos and values have informed decision making throughout this environmental audits project.

## **Our Connected Neighbourhoods: Values and Ethos**

OCN understands a dementia-friendly community to be a community of place, interest, or identity that enables people living with dementia to remain socially and physically active, and to play central and leading roles in each stage and at all levels of community development. To achieve this we believe it is important to find inclusive methods and practical approaches that recognise and value skills and experience past and present, of all individuals, removing barriers and building capacity as we go. For OCN this includes a commitment to equality, anti-discriminatory practice and the empowerment of people living with dementia.

The expertise by experience of people with dementia is central to OCN, so all activities including the present project are guided by methods of co-production, following the principle of ***'nothing about us, without us'***.

However, in the present project these principles were taken further than before. People with dementia and their carers were, not only supported to participate in the project but were, offered empowerment through ownership of project at almost every level. This manifested in the formation of an enthusiastic team of local citizen volunteers who directed project planning, led audit activities, and steered the contents of this final project report.

We had anticipated facilitating closer work between citizens and Council staff during some stages of this project but for various reasons, especially the Covid-19 outbreak, this did not occur. We would look to ensure this mode of closer collaborative work is integrated into future projects of this nature.



# Environmental Audits: Project Structure

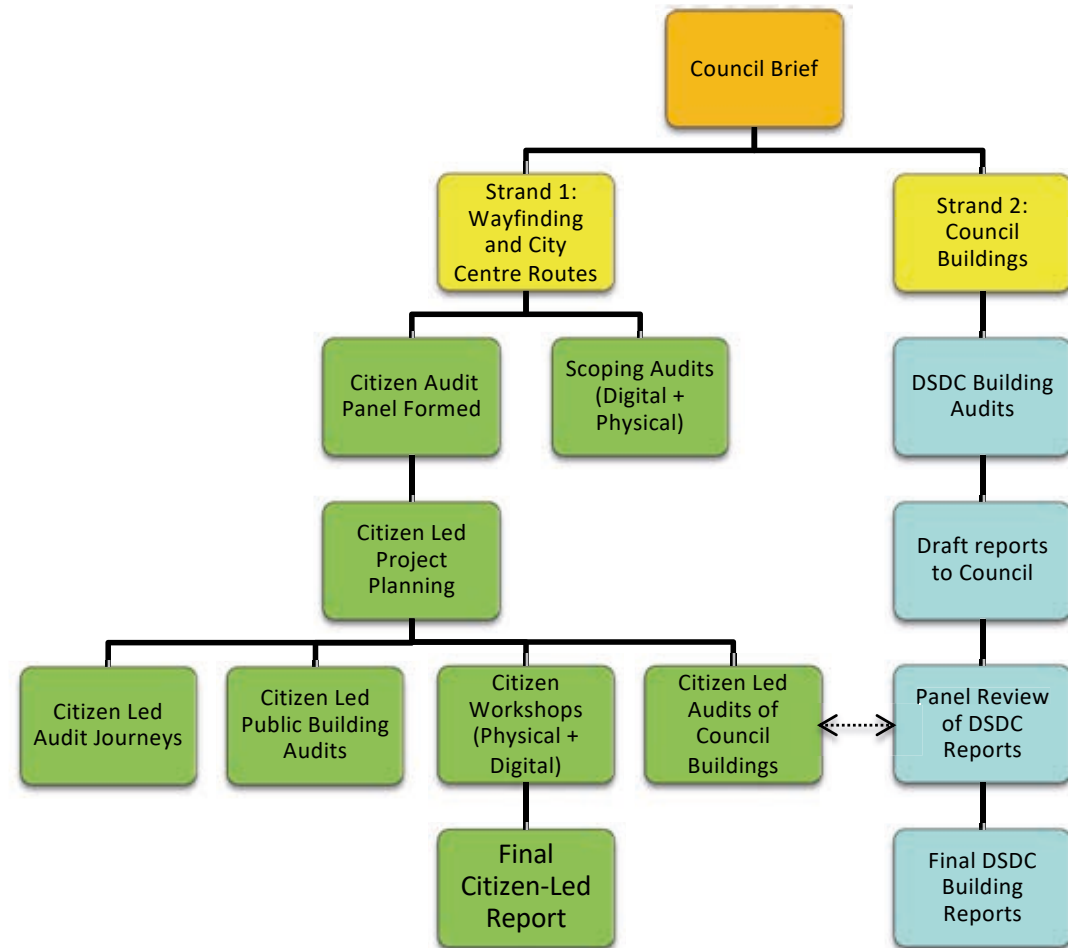
The overall project was run as two strands:

## 1. Wayfinding and City Centre Routes:

A series of environmental journeys around central Stirling were planned and then undertaken by voluntary panel local Stirling residents including older people, including those living with dementia, and their carers. They recorded their experiences as they audited public buildings, streets, and spaces – then discussed their findings in a local café. This report focuses more on this strand.

## 2. Council Buildings

Council Buildings were audited in a two-stage process. Five key Stirling Council buildings were assessed by the DSDC who produced report based on formal research evidence in dementia design. The citizen audit team also audited these buildings (and others) as part of their program of journey audits. The findings of both sets of building audits were used to inform a citizen-led prioritised list of preferred improvements to council venues.



# Recruiting Citizen Audit Team Members

The flyer features logos for dsdc (Dementia Services Development Centre), Stirling Council, and Alzheimer Scotland (Action on Dementia) at the top. The main title is "Environment Assessments" in large, bold letters. Below the title is an image of a hand holding a small white card with "MURRAY'S" written on it. The central text reads: "Join us! For relaxed group assessments of key public buildings, routes and spaces in Stirling. Help to Inform Stirling Council where to allocate funds to make improvements." To the left of this text is a sketch of a building. Below the text, it specifies: "When: Fridays", "Time: 12:30 - 2:30", "Where: Various Stirling Locations", and "Contact: ocn@stir.ac.uk Donna 01786 831 171". At the bottom, there are logos for art link central, UNIVERSITY of STIRLING, and Our Connected Neighbourhoods.

Participants in the *Our Connected Neighbourhoods* dementia friendly communities project were invited to an initial project scoping and trial audit walk, with a follow-up project planning workshop the following week. From these sessions a programmed of weekly group activities was developed.

Whilst walking audits required that those taking part were physically fit enough to do so, a series of indoor workshops to be held at accessible venues was also planned, making use of image supported discussion as a way of including those unable to attend walking audits, whether due to reduced physically ability, or other reasons.

Information about the program was distributed through local social groups and support organizations, including Alzheimer's Scotland groups, local walking groups, and Town Break to invite participation. A flyer (opposite) was also distributed to partnership groups and on social media platforms to raise awareness of the project and encourage participation.

The resulting overall Citizen Audit Team comprised a mix of older people, including those living with dementia, various physical impairments and several carers.





# The Citizen Audit Team

The citizen audit group comprised a mix of more than twelve Stirling residents living with dementia and their carers (some wished to remain anonymous).



**Margaret**



**Janet**



**Vibeke**



**Rufus**

**Kathleen  
Jim**

**David  
Jean**

**Judith  
Jim**

**Maureen  
James**

We take this opportunity to thank them all for offering their valuable time, energy, and diverse experiential expertise to direct and undertake audit activities. Extra thanks to the team members who steered project reporting findings and recommendations evolved – and for astute review as report completion approached.



# The Support Team

The Citizen Audit Team were supported by staff from Alzheimer Scotland, Artlink Central, and the University of Stirling with administrative and logistical aspects of the project. They also helped by facilitating group discussions and workshops, and by collating, refining, and revising project reporting as directed by the Citizen Audit Team.



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# Making Stirling a Dementia Friendly City

## Scoping, Planning and Method Development



# Project Scoping and Trial Walking Audit



Map of project scoping walk with route (dotted)  
(Base map from [www.openstreetmap.org](http://www.openstreetmap.org))

The initial activity undertaken by the citizen audit team was a project scoping and trial walking audit – beginning with a briefing discussion at the Bus Station followed by a walking journey around the city centre. The exact route was not planned but took shape in response to evolving discussion.

The activity gave the group a sense of how long route walks could last, and what the scale of the project might be. It allowed us to consider how to best accommodate the varying needs, abilities, and interests of participants (and potential participants), to consider logistics, welfare, possible audit methods, how to ensure winter audit sessions remain enjoyable. The walk also offered an opportunity to drop-in and informally introduce some members of the group at the potential venues.

# Citizen Directed Project Planning Workshop

Following the scoping walk the group held a project workshop to plan the main project activities. Along with the core team of auditors this workshop also included some other people who were unable to participate in the walking activities, but were keen to be involved, to share their experiences, and to contribute to the project.

Whilst the overall project brief required venue audits to focus on Stirling Council buildings, the group took advantage of the invitation of the project brief to also address the priorities of people living with dementia and their carers.

They reviewed the list of buildings suggested by the Council including the councils top six priority buildings. The group separately identified their own priority list venues; and then discussed how the design the audit routes could best accommodate a visit to the buildings with the highest combined priority ranking.

Council Priority Building		Citizen Priority Building	Further Citizen Suggestions
Bus Station	#1	Albert Halls	Community Hospital
Customer First	#2	Bellfield Centre	Cinema
Library	#3	Bus Station	Back Walk
Tolbooth	#4	The Peak	Kings Park
Albert Halls	#5	Thistles Centre	Smith Gallery
The Peak	#6	Library	Tourist Info Point
Thistles Centre	#7	Tesco	Active Travel Hub
Kings Park	#8	Tolbooth	Stirling Castle
Bellfield	#9	Sainsbury's	Morrison's
Sainsbury's	#10	Customer First	Stirling Albion
Tesco	#11	Stirling Castle	Cowane Centre

*Outcomes of an initial audit venue prioritisation exercise informing audit route design - and identifying other venues for possible future audits.*

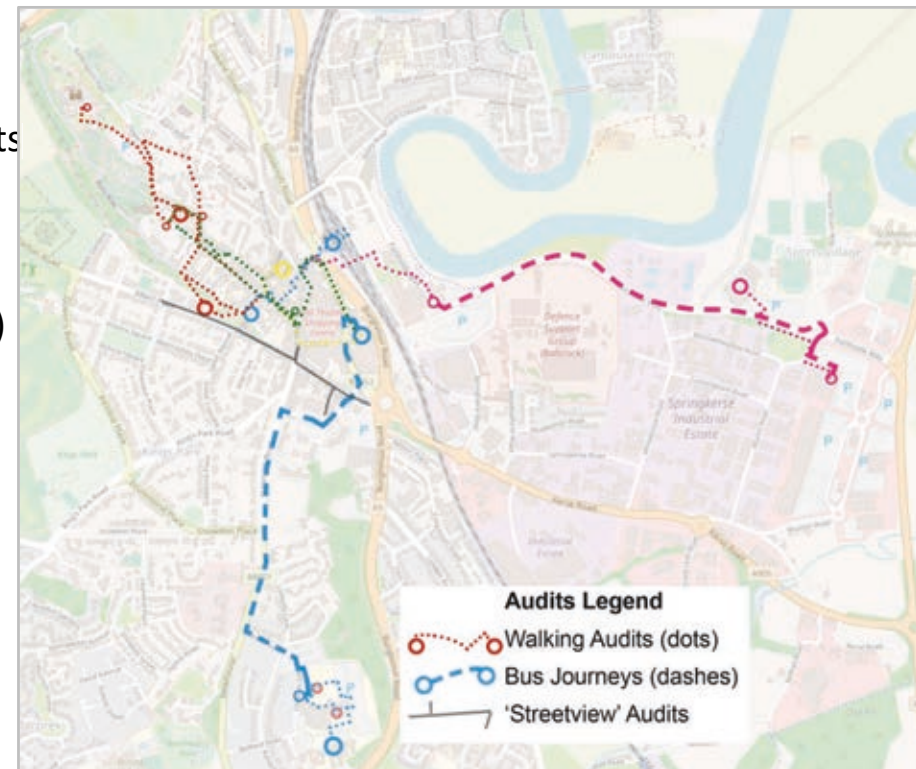


# Environment Audit Planning: Themes & Zones

As project planning discussions developed there was an evolving sense of the similarities between the experiences by local people living with dementia finding their way around Stirling to that of tourists arriving in Stirling for the first time, with only a few specific locations less relevant to one group than the other. The audit routes were selected as opportunities to explore the notion of creating cohesive and readable routes through the city, to navigate between key hubs, to curate heritage, leisure, and retail routes that might enhance a visitor or dementia-friendly experience, potentially offering an inclusive tourist and resident experience of Stirling.

As key locations of interest to both tourists and local people were identified, themes began to evolve with some key zones, hubs, thoroughfares and decision points becoming clearer, including:

- City centre around the bottom of King's Street
- Travel Hub (train & bus station, station square)
- Top of the Town (Tolbooth, Tourist Info, Mercat Cross)
- Port Street and Upper Craigs Street ends
- Spittal Street access by Albert Halls, Codebase, Back-Walk and Library
- Park and Ride Stations (via Morrison's/Peak)
- The Barracks (incl. Vue Cinema, Engine Shed)
- Supermarkets (Waitrose/Tesco/Sainsburys)
- Stirling Health and Care Village



*Compound map of audit routes and travel modes.*

# Environment Audit Route Planning

Audit	Meeting Point: Activity
Scoping Audit	<b>Stirling Bus Station:</b> City Centre Walk incl. <b>Tolbooth</b>
Audit #1	<b>Albert Halls:</b> Top of the Town Walk
Audit #2	Train Station: Walk via Stirling Arcade to <b>Central Library</b>
Audit #3	<b>Bus Station:</b> Bus Trip to Audit at <b>Stirling Health and Care Village</b>
Special Audit	<b>Customer First:</b> Visit to Customer First and Walk up Broad street
Audit #4	Vue cinema: Bus to <b>Peak Leisure Centre</b> and walk to Morrison's/ Park and Ride. Return by bus to Vue and walk to Town Centre past Engine Shed over bridge.
Audit #5	Darnley Coffee, Broad Street: Walk via <b>Tolbooth</b> and Tourist Office etc to <b>Stirling Castle</b> (Cancelled due to COVID-19 but replaced with a digital audit of Upper Craigs – see workshop schedule)

The audit program – as undertaken

Once priority venues were established, the series of walks (and bus rides) between them was sketched out. The routes were all planned to meet the following objectives:

1. To visit and audit all (5) key Council venues being formally assessed by DSDC, to undertake parallel citizen audits.
2. To visits Council buildings (5) in the same order as the councils' priority order. (Achieved, except for *Customer First*).
3. Meeting points planned to suit arrival on foot or by bus.
4. Audits routes to end at a key venue or back at start point.
5. Include a mix of bus and walking routes/journeys.
6. Include least one coffee shop stop. Aiming for one as a breakout during the audit, and another as a debrief discussion amongst those who could stay afterwards.

*Google Streetview* and digital maps were tested during the project planning workshop as an aid to discussion, and possible method of virtual audits – allowing citizens unable to take part in any walking audits to still participate through workshops. The group also discussed potentially innovative audit methods and technologies to be tested during the audits. Finally, they planned a program of further workshops to accompany the main audit sessions – as outlined on the following page.



# Environment Audit Workshop Planning

No:	Activity Type	Meeting Point: Activity
1	Indoor Workshop	Tolbooth: Citizen Led Project Planning Workshop. Light Citizen Audit of the Tolbooth building. Test of group virtual audit using <i>Google Streetview</i> etc.
2	Indoor Workshop	Albert Halls: Citizen Audit of Albert Halls. Recap of audits to date & citizen review of findings from DSDC building assessment reporting.
3	2 x Online Workshops	Online Video Conference (Zoom): Citizen feedback on draft environment audits report. Discussion on methods to include feedback from citizen group members who might otherwise be unable to contribute.
4	1 x Phone Meeting	This session allowed for input from a citizen team member who was unable to attend an online workshop. They were sent copies of the draft audit report material in advance so could comment on this during the call.
5	Online Audit Workshop (Upper Craigs)	Online Video Conference (Zoom): Discussion on current urban design proposals for Upper Craigs (in-lieu of walking audit) at request of the Council. This session also used <i>Google Streetview</i> to support a group audit of the local streetscape. Findings of the virtual audit were added to those undertaken in-person in other areas of Stirling City Centre.
6	Dementia Design Training	The DSDC will deliver a half-day of dementia design training to key council staff. (Postponed due to COVID-19, new date TBC).
7	Presentation: Conclusion	This public event will present the project activities, findings, and prioritised wish-list of environment changes. Invitees to include key council staff, local councillors, project participants, local charity organisations, and others. (Postponed due to COVID-19, new date TBC).

*Program of audit project workshops undertaken – as modified due to the impact of COVID-19 restrictions.*



# Data Collection Methods

The audit team used variety of data collection methods. These included conventional approaches such as group discussion and photographic surveys but extended this to trials of innovative multi-media techniques including walking interviews, discursive sketching, and 'point-of-view' video recordings. Over the first few sessions the group also developed two new dementia-friendly environmental audit tools (see following pages). The methods/equipment used included the following:

- Go-Pro video, providing an "in the eyes of the person" experience
- Audio recordings during environment audits and walking interviews
- Photographs – including both positive and 'for improvement' features
- Smartphone video recordings
- Sketching – as part of audits and as part of workshop conversations
- Testing existing audit tools – then developing and using new ones



Go-Pro, 'Selfie stick' & Smartphones (Video, Audio, Photos, Maps etc)

A recording sheet for a city walking audit. It includes fields for Name, Start of Route or Meeting Point, How did you get here?, Route, and several Likert scales (1-5) for questions about accessibility, public toilets, and other environmental factors.A grid of six colored boxes for an environment audit tool. The boxes are labeled: Meeting Places, Finding your way, Surfaces, Places to sit, Things to do, Stories or memories, Worries, and Best bits.

Environment Audit Tools



Sketching Ideas




Point-of-View (POV) video recording

# Venue Audit: 'Recording Sheet'

**City walking audit:**

**Recording Sheet**



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Start of Route or Meeting Point \_\_\_\_\_

How did you get here? \_\_\_\_\_

Route - Where do you go from here? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you know where the nearest public toilets are?  
Yes No  
Where are they? \_\_\_\_\_

On a scale of comfortable (5) to very uncomfortable (1), can you rate how this place makes you feel?

**1 2 3 4 5**

Can you find information at the place easily (5) highest (1) lowest, can you rate how this place makes you feel?

**1 2 3 4 5**

Do you feel relaxed (5) or anxious (1), can you rate how this place makes you feel?

**1 2 3 4 5**

Do you find this place welcoming, from (5) very welcoming to (1) very unfriendly

**1 2 3 4 5**

[www.ourconnectedneighbourhoods.org.uk](http://www.ourconnectedneighbourhoods.org.uk)

Audit tools can be useful both for prompting thought and discussion during an audit activity, but also as a valuable way of recording information in a systematic format.

Initially, examples of existing audit tools were discussed and tested, but found that they: asked too many specific questions; lacked user-friendliness, and; distracted from meaningful conversations amongst the group. Two new tools were developed and refined to retain only meaningful user-friendly questions. The first of these tools (left) was then used at the public venues forming the start and/or end points of environmental audit walks.

This audit tool aims to draw on the social/emotional response that places and routes evoke for user in the space and recognizes that as a valid starting point to link the user experience to environmental characteristics, providing an opportunity to compare peoples' experiences of each venue. This can prompt group discussions about the use or purpose of a space, and what changes to the physical (and social) design of the setting might improve the experience of them. This tool and others will be incorporated to open source guidance available to other groups through the *Our Connected Neighbourhoods* project.

# Journey Audit: 'Sketch and Scribble'



The review of existing environmental audit tools by the group also found them to be restrictive, by being excessively pre-descriptive, posing too many questions, and only supporting written words as answers.

So a second tool (left) was co-designed, trialed, and revised with the citizen audit team, providing the following features:

- Members have opportunity to record in ways that suit them, including sketching, short notes, etc.
- It is a visual tool that prompts personal responses across physical, social, and emotional domains
- It gathers information for analysis in a thematic way
- It allows users to capture what is important to them
- It encourages discussion on both positive and negative aspects of team members' experience of each activity, route, and space.

During the audits, additional blank sheets and pens are provided to encourage participants to expand their thoughts by drawing and sketching both the issues and their ideas for changes they would like to see.

Examples of information recorded using this tool are presented, in a similar format, through this report



# Audit Tool Development

**Recording Sheet**

Name: *MARGARET ROBERTSON*

Start of Route or Meeting Point: *CENTRAL LIBRARY*

How did you get here?: *Walked very slowly from train station*

Route - Where do you go from here?: *home*

Do you know where the nearest public toilets are?

Yes  No

Where are they?: *There are no toilets signage advising when walking up the stairs*

On a scale of comfortable (5) to very uncomfortable (1), can you rate how this place makes you feel?

1 2 3 4 5

Can you find information at the place easily (5) highest (1) lowest, can you rate how this place makes you feel?

1 2 3 4 5

Do you feel relaxed (5) or anxious (1), can you rate how this place makes you feel?

1 2 3 4 5

Do you find this place welcoming, from (5) very welcoming to (1) very unfriendly

1 2 3 4 5

www.ourconnectedneighbourhoods.org.uk

Trials of the new tools showed they were easy and useful for citizens to summarize their experiences of each place and journey. Here: The auditor identifies that the library is a welcoming and comfortable place, but physical access, and toilet provision need to be improved.

**Our Connected Neighbourhoods Audit Journey Sketch & Scribble**

Route: *Train station to Central Library*

Meeting Places: *Nice and warm and welcoming*

Finding your way: *I would get confused and I would need someone to help me.*

Surfaces (windows, pavement, materials): *There is no lift. Lots of stairs which would take me a while to navigate. There were some uneven surfaces.*

Places to sit: *Lots of chairs and comfy chairs or couches.*

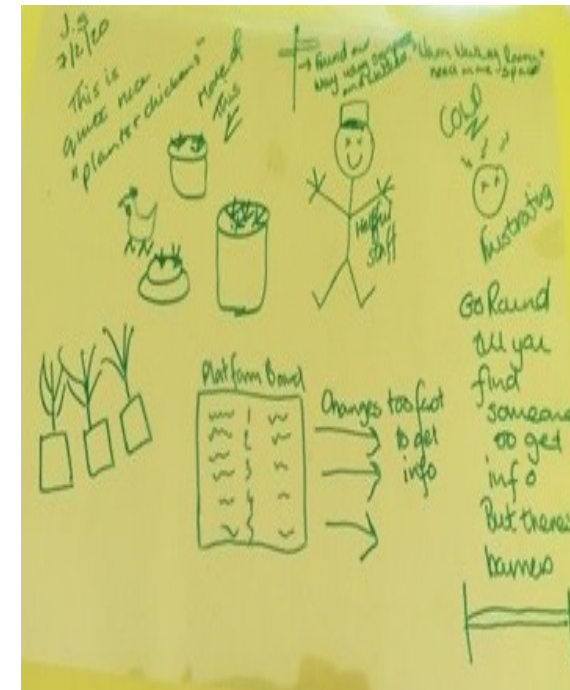
Things to do / Things to see: *Read the papers. Have a look at books. Information section for children.*

Stories or memories: *I get my books from the mobile library, family and friend buy me a book from local library. Used to take my son to the story telling.*

Worries: *Stairs. Getting lost. Would't go by myself. Parking. Speaking in hush voice.*

Best bits: *Atmosphere.*

Whilst the 'recording sheet' helped identify how people felt and how well orientated they were, the 'sketch and scribble' prompted the identification of the environmental factors affecting the person's experience – whether positive or negative.



Expansion from the audit tools into other formats of recording, such as sketching, allowed individuals to contribute in ways that suited them. Here: Thoughts on the signage, travel information, staff, waiting spaces, etc. at the train station

# Making Stirling a Dementia Friendly City



## Strand 1: Wayfinding and City Centre Routes



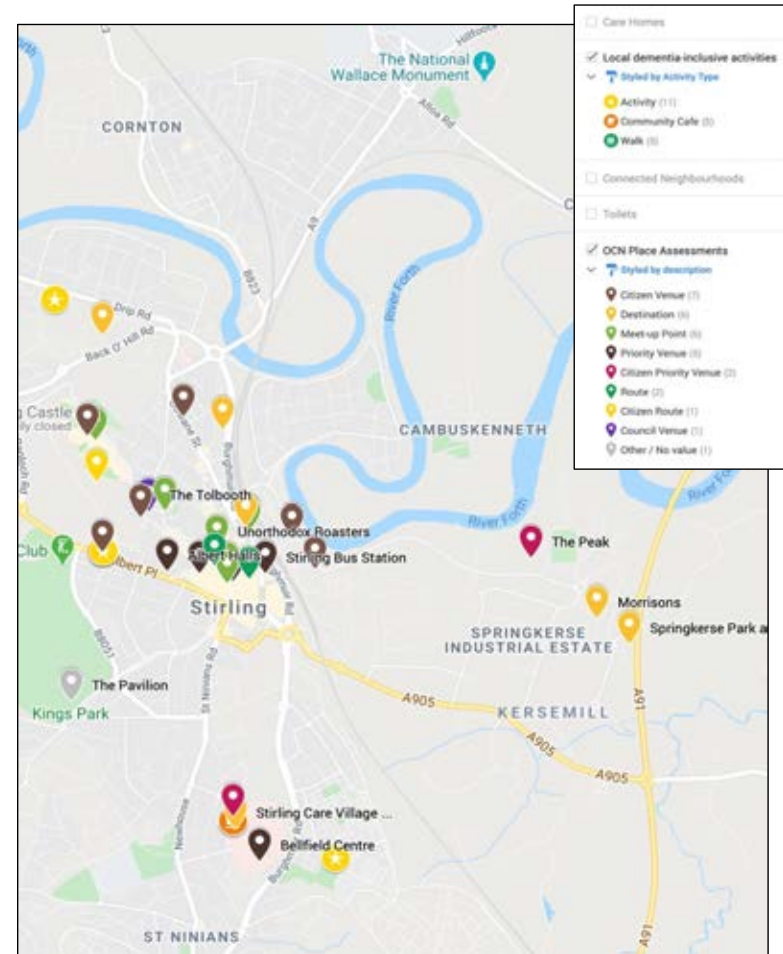
# Environmental Audits – Strand 1: Public Routes and Places

In this strand, the Citizen auditors directed, and undertook audits of a number routes around Stirling Town Centre. The routes focussed on linking the transport hubs of the Bus and Rail Stations to other important public spaces and places.

Audit journeys took place on foot, by bus, or in combination, and used several approaches to recording and assessing citizen experience of places and spaces in the city. Methods chosen to suit the preferences and interests of individual participants included audio recordings, drawings, photography, video – and lead to the development of two simple audit tools used to inform, but not dictate, the audit process.

As part of the audit journeys the group undertook audits of public buildings. This included audits of five key Stirling Council buildings, reported under Strand 2 of the project.

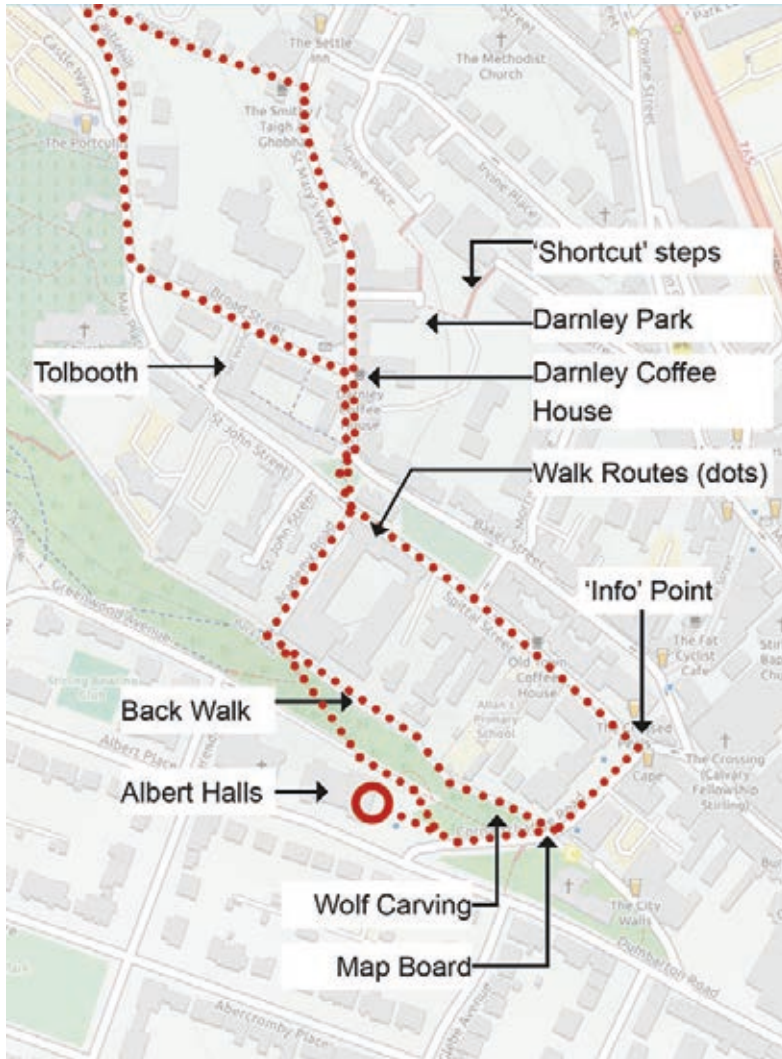
Although the audits focused on attributes of the physical environment, they included observations on social and organisational matters, including customer service, council operations, and the all-important hunt for city's best café!



*A draft map of important local places, organizations, and regular dementia-friendly activities as identified by the citizen group*



# Citizen Audit #1: Back Walk and Top of the Town



The scoping walk had revealed that some residents preferred to navigate the city by pedestrian routes that were often not explicit and not accessible by car. E.g. City centre to the Tolbooth via the Back Walk. Given this and the priority of the Albert Halls (Henderson's Restaurant) as an important meeting point, and gateway into the city, the group elected to audit the Halls first and to take a circular walking route around the top of the town to understand the potential for dementia friendly pedestrian walks in this area.

This walk showed that more historic and peaceful routes, that avoid car traffic, lacked the supporting elements that some people would need – including clear wayfinding prompts and frequent places to sit for rest; whilst the routes used by cars, and currently more likely to be used by tourists en-route to the Castle had slightly better signage and seating but otherwise much less pedestrian-friendly.

The enhancement of Back Walk, connecting vennels, parks and street spaces leading up to the Top of the Town would open the possibilities for a range of active travel across the city's historic quarter, to improve pedestrian experiences by exposing more people to the rich history and a potentially vibrant art and culture scene at the top of the town.



# Citizen Audit #1: Back Walk and Top of the Town p24




Access to the many possible walking paths across the top of the town, especially the Back Walk, are unsigned, obscured by other notices, or blocked by other structures.



Existing notice boards and information kiosks have underutilised surfaces that could display local maps, or other wayfinding information or commission artworks.



 Heritage signposts are attractive and good size but not visually distinct from lamp posts and other railings and poles. Height is also a problem for noticing and then accessing the information.

## Signage and Wayfinding

With a clear wayfinding strategy, several walking routes including the Back Walk could be 'unlocked' as alternative and quick ways to move around the city. These could help to encourage active travel and to release the potential of Stirling as a 'walkable' city, to the benefit of tourists and locals alike.

Existing maps and information points are often located away from natural route choice locations, & unhelpfully advertise many local businesses that no longer exist.





# Citizen Audit #1: Back Walk and Top of the Town p25



Artwork and historic artefacts can provide helpful landmarks – and signs explaining their story adds to the understanding and value of place.



Flora, fauna, and historic elements featured in several audit journey – with team members finding personal value in some fine detail on their favoured routes, that others might miss. E.g. pigeon nests in the city wall.



Whilst acknowledging that there are plenty of public bins, helpful to those with dogs for example, the team noted a distinct shortage of seating or clear pedestrian signage – both essential elements of walking routes for many older people.

# Citizen Audit #1: Back Walk and Top of the Town p26



Narrow footpaths are regularly obstructed by large bins, increasing concern of nearby fast-moving cars.



Despite story plaques telling interesting stories, spaces such as the Vennels feel uninviting, preventing use, and causing anxiety.



There are several small parks off Spittal & Baker Streets, but accessibility is limited. Steps feel unsafe. Handrails hard to see.



Seating is welcome, but metal/stone finishes are too uncomfortable for most of the year



The road train is interesting, but it's hard to find out where and when to catch it. Looks like a bumpy ride!



Bin clutter, broken and uneven paving, and the noise of traffic can all be distressing.

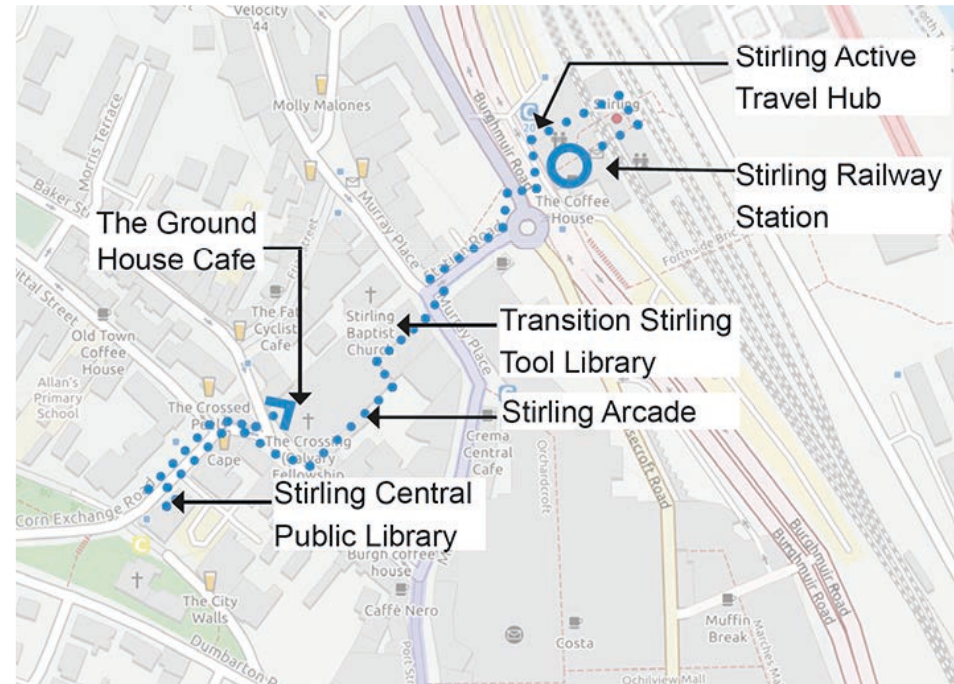
# Citizen Audit #2: Train Station to Central Library p27

This audit walk from the train station to the central library was planned to take the most direct, and best wet-weather, route via Stirling Arcade.

The participants decided to incorporate an audit of the train station into the review of the journey and approached staff directly to request access and to ask detailed questions. The staff were very open, forthcoming and responsive. All the train staff encountered can be commended for their customer service. (This differed somewhat from the group's experience in some planned council building audits – where some staff could be defensive, resistant, and focussed on organisational hierarchy instead of delivering customer service).

There was agreement that the cityscape presented upon exiting the train station lacked an appropriate sense of civic *welcome*. All were concerned about the lack of high-quality wayfinding cues towards key town-centre destinations.

The Stirling Arcade was deemed to be a positive but under-utilised place, with the potential to add a vibrant town centre destination itself.



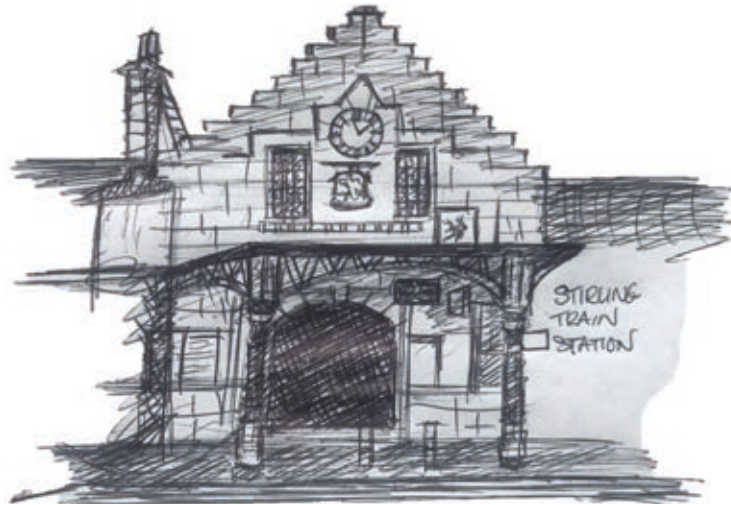
Audit Route #2: Train Station to Library via Stirling Arcade

The group agreed the central library is very well located, close to other key civic amenities. Although the interior is beautiful, bright, calm, and comfortable, issues with physical accessibility and lack of public access to the toilets in the building makes visiting difficult for all, and impossible for some.

# Citizen Audit #2: Train Station to Central Library p28

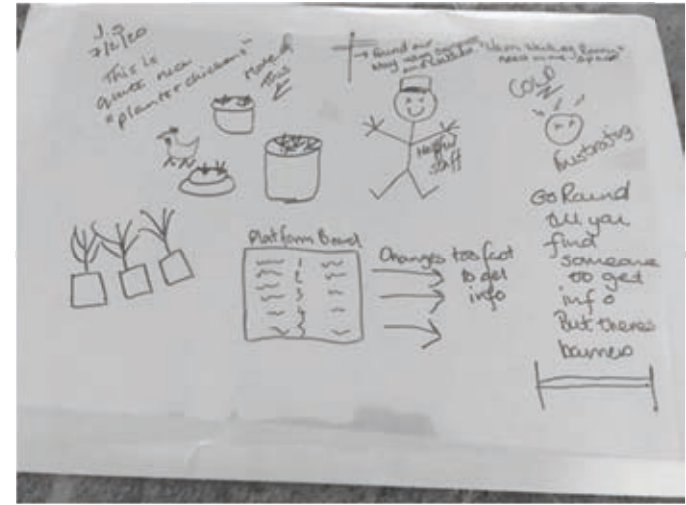


Although the train station had some items with room for improvement (e.g. lift controls) there were several lessons that could be used for the bus station.



The train station is easier to recognize and find than most other buildings in this part of town. It is well located for the city centre, and for transfer to other forms of transport.

The live travel information boards, including at least one for each platform, are invaluable. They provide reassurance to passengers who need time to move between platforms – whilst also reducing the need for the ability to read small print timetables or the need to ask station staff.



The staff at the train station are very helpful. Wayfinding is distinctive and at times humorous. The greening of the station is welcomed.

Toilets can be challenging to access – especially getting to, and into the disabled toilets.

It can be cold waiting on the platforms, but warmer waiting rooms are available next to the main platforms.

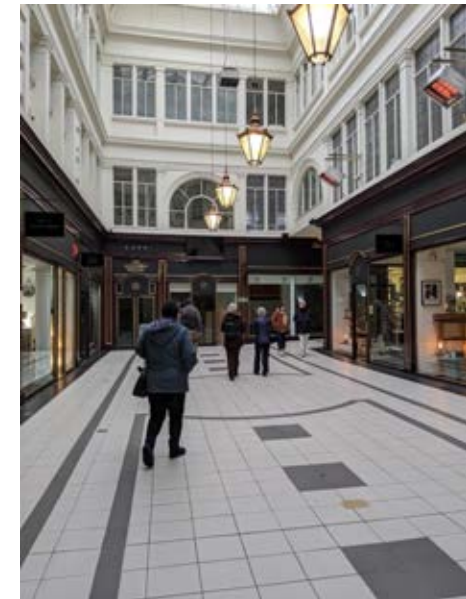
# Citizen Audit #2: Train Station to Central Library p29



Stirling Arcade is one of the most attractive and prominent buildings visible from the train station exit – so might be well placed as a location for shopping, tourist information, or as a special destination. Although it serves as a good all-weather short cut to King St, the reduced visibility of the through-access (due to its cranked layout) and lack of directional signage mean that only those with local knowledge seem to use it.



A pleasant discovery in Arcade was the *Transition Stirling* Tool Library. Most of the group were not aware of this movement/service. One team member vowed to return to borrow some tools, and another to have a sewing machine repaired. Greater awareness of this would help many older residents.



The group liked attractive Victorian feel of the arcade, but the lack of seating and narrow range of shops means people did not see themselves visiting much. They suggested to add some cafés, deli's, or a greater mix of other local retailers to make the arcade a more popular destination.

# Citizen Audit #2: Train Station to Central Library



The group regularly found issues with differentiation of spaces and surfaces by user type in the City Centre, meaning constant concern about fast-moving vehicles and bikes. The boundaries between different areas can be unclear as paving materials look too similar – especially when wet.



Wall mounted signage at bottom of Spittal St. may be helpful for drivers entering the city, but less helpful to pedestrians. The digital information totem is a good idea but has too much emphasis on commercial information, and not enough wayfinding or tourist information. The black colour of the totem and the orientation of the screen may also mean many people miss it. The back could also be used for a second screen, maps, artwork, etc. Improved versions here, and at other key locations in other areas of the city could help improve the experience of the city – with their physical appearance even act as wayfinding prompts or landmarks.



Physical access to the library is difficult. Entry signage with opening times is too high up and too small to be read easily. (More comments on the library are reported in Strand 2).

# Citizen Audit #2: Train Station to Central Library

Meeting Places	Finding Your Way	Surfaces	Places to Sit
<p>People usually meet in the main foyer or outside the train station. There is a lack of seating for people who need it in these areas. The square opposite the station could be redesigned to provide a distinct Stirling welcome, including places to sit, and meet.</p>	<p>Electronic signs are helpful but change too quickly. Lifts and platform signage should be more visible- especially from decision points. Some signs would be better being perpendicular to current positions. Too often, advertising dominates over vital travel information.</p>	<p>Yellow lines on the stairs in the station are fading as is some signage for lifts. Improved pedestrian crossing at the station, and to the arcade would enhance the route between the City Centre and the train station.</p>	<p>There is a lack of seating along the way. They could be especially helpful along corridor through the Arcade (as this space provides shelter from the weather).</p>
Things to See and Do	Stories or Memories	Worries	Best Bits
<p>Train Station had good displays to create interest. The toolshed (Transition Stirling) was a highlight and new to most. The Arcade could draw more people with things to do and places to eat and access to Alhambra above.</p>	<p>Lots of stories and memories generated along this route, childhood memories of the library and travel. The Arcade is an opportunity to engage in heritage.</p>	<p>Accessing disabled toilets (in the train station) is complicated and the keys and signage make it difficult. Could these toilets be made more accessible with smart tech? No toilets and poor access to library.</p>	<p>The (main) interior space of the library is very welcoming and was a highlight for people. Can Codebase help with public toilets? Or move the youth services and improve library access.</p>

*Sample citizen journey audit with an emphasis on the train station - recorded using the 'Sketch and Scribble' Audit Tool*

# Citizen Audit #3: Bus Trip and Health Village



This audit included the journey from a meeting point at the Bus Station to Stirling Health and Community Care Village, travelling by bus, then wayfinding to the Bellfield Centre on foot.

Whilst this was the second group visit to the bus station, adding the activity of undertaking a bus journey provided an enhanced insight to the potential challenges that public transport can pose for people living with dementia. It confirmed previously identified potential problems, revealed the coping and problem solving mechanisms used by people with dementia when using public transport, and highlighted the significant difference that both clear travel information and transport staff can make to the travel experience.

Whilst the group found several challenges, including confusing wayfinding around the older buildings at the health and care village, they found newer buildings included, what they considered to be, very good examples dementia-friendly design. The volunteer-run café was cited as a very good example of a relaxed and welcoming experience.

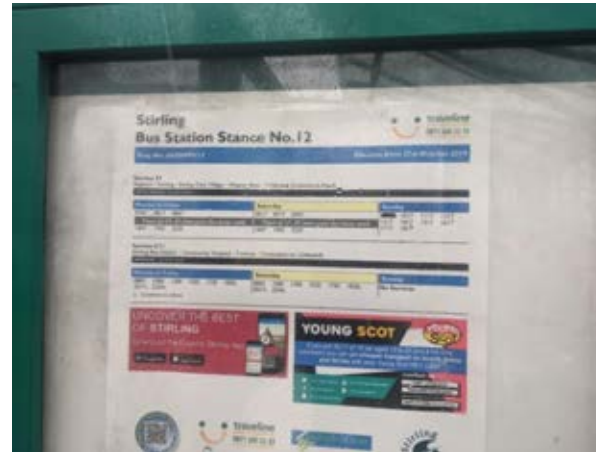




# Citizen Audit #3: Bus Trip and Health Village



People used a range of strategies to find the right stop and bus information, but typically asked passers-by or staff. The weather made it more challenging to wait at the stand, but people preferred to wait at the bus stop as, unlike the train station, it is not as easy to wait indoors and check minute by minute details of your bus arrival.




Reading the timetables is almost impossible for some people, but all agreed they would much easier to read if the information was enlarged to fill the display frames in the stands. There is no diagram of the station layout or a route map which could also help people to find the right stand. In many cases, more space is used on advertising than helpful travel information.




Attempts to read what should be simple bus timetable information at the Care Village also proved challenging. Here other older people we met, who were unable to read the timetables, felt the need to consign themselves to stand waiting (with little shelter on a day with poor weather) for as long for as it took until the next bus happened to arrive.

# Citizen Audit #3: Bus Trip and Health Village




 We were dependent on the driver to let us know when we reached the correct stop as the visibility out the windows was very poor. Digital signage upgrades would help as would audio recordings of stops. The driver did stop and let us know when we arrived.



 Arriving at the Stirling Health and Care Village it is confusing to navigate unless you are going to Outpatients or to GP and Minor Injuries. The metal maps are small, hard to read, and easy to miss. There are lots of cycle options from here.



 The Bellfield is the third main building on campus but there are no directions from arrival, either through or around other buildings. Strategies of asking for help could not be used as the Outpatients reception desk was closed.

# Citizen Audit #3: Bus Trip and Health Village

Meeting Places	Finding Your Way	Surfaces	Places to Sit
<p>The bus station waiting area was a comfortable assembly point and the RVS café at the Outpatients Department had a good mix of facilities and welcoming staff. The Café at the Bellfield was not yet open and would be a focal point for meeting in the future.</p>	<p>Lack of signage on bus route in general and timetable was too small. The wayfinding at the Stirling Health and Care Village inconsistent. Very poor getting from the bus stop to the Bellfield, but quite good in the new building.</p>	<p>Surfaces and pavements were adequate for the most part. The long corridors in the Outpatients Department are featureless and difficult for wayfinding.</p>	<p>There are a lack of seating spaces along main corridors through Outpatients. Cafes and reception areas had adequate seating.</p>
Things to See and Do	Stories or Memories	Worries	Best Bits
<p>The Bellfield Centre offers a range of community-based opportunities, and Town Break is onsite at the Outpatients department. There are artworks in the Bellfield and a café.</p>	<p>Lots of memories about the old hospital, most local people were born there. Could be an idea to capture these within artworks or displays in the older part of the hospital.</p>	<p>Distance and signage. Length of walk from the buses to buildings – without opportunity to rest. Lack of signage to be sure you were going the right way.</p>	<p>Furnishings at the Bellfield Centre, Changing Places (although not adequately signposted), Café.</p>

*Sample citizen journey audit for Bus Station to Bellfield journey - recorded using the 'Sketch and Scribble' Audit Tool*



# Citizen Audit #3: Bus Trip and Health Village

Meeting Places	Finding Your Way	Surfaces	Places to Sit
<p>RVS Café is a good place to meet.</p>	<p>No directions coming off the bus. Very confusing. Nobody on reception. Poor signage. Café staff helpful. Anxious trying to find the way from the bus stop to the Bellfield Centre.</p>	<p>Flat surfaces are ok. Floor materials changing can be tricky for those who shuffle. Corridors wide and smooth.</p>	<p>Plenty upon entering main building, but none as you navigate through long corridors.</p>
Things to See and Do	Stories or Memories	Worries	Best Bits
<p>Tables in the café next to windows to people watch.</p>	<p>Café was good.</p>	<p>Can't find the way, poor signage, nobody on reception to ask.</p>	<p>RVS café staff, very friendly and helpful.</p>

*Sample citizen walking journey audit for the Health and Care Village*

# Stirling Health and Care Village: Overview

Most outcomes of the review of the Health and Care village revolved around concerns to do with wayfinding from the bus stop around and through the older buildings Outpatients building to either of the newer buildings.

## Overall Positives

- New buildings are well designed
- Café is a valuable rest and meeting point
- Accessible signage design (new buildings)
- Access to cycles and active transport

## Areas for Improvement

- Lack of signage to some key areas
- Inconsistent signage in Outpatients
- Lack of reception in Outpatients
- Poor quality, size, and frequency of maps
- Recognisability/character of spaces
- Long corridors with no rest points

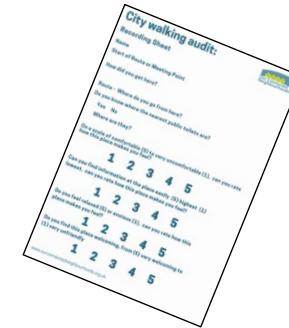
	Level of Comfort				
	1	2	3	4	5
P1c			X		
P3p			X		
P4c		X			

	Ease of Access to Info.				
	1	2	3	4	5
P1c		X			
P3p	X				
P4c		X			

	Relaxed to Anxious				
	1	2	3	4	5
P1c			X		
P3p			X		
P4c	X				

	Unfriendly vs Welcoming				
	1	2	3	4	5
P1c			X		
P3p		X			
P4c	X				

*Citizen Auditor experience ratings for the Outpatients building*



Whilst visiting the Outpatients building some participants answered questions from the venue recording sheet, scoring the experience of their visit. The tables on the right summarize their scored responses on a 1-5 Likert scale. (1 low to 5 high). The combined experience of the group tended towards feeling a lack of welcome, and high levels of anxiety about wayfinding challenges. This feeling was mildly offset by positive experience in the volunteer-run Café.



# Bellfield Centre: Citizen Review



Wayfinding to get to the Bellfield was the biggest challenge. Signs directing to the venue barely exist. Many others out of date.



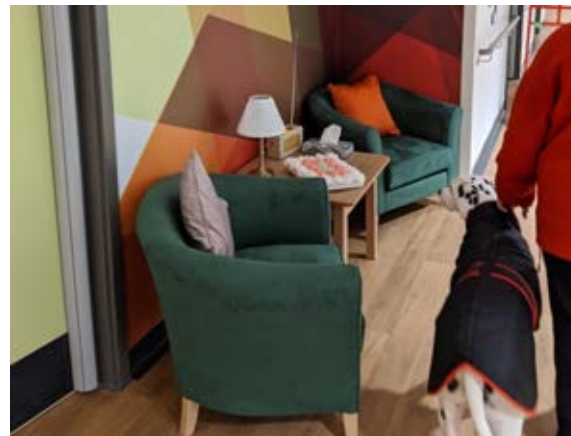
The *Changing Places* facility in the Bellfield is most welcome but could be better signed.



Overall, the design of the Bellfield Centre is positive with only a handful of items for improvement. E.g. contrasting threshold strips



The furniture used in the Bellfield is excellent – there is always something suitable.



Comfortable seating nooks make the corridors feel welcoming



Interesting artwork provides talking points and helps make different spaces recognizable.

# Citizen Audit #4: Bus Trip, the Peak, & Morrison's

The purpose of this trip was to explore some of the key elements of a leisure route that offers several important venues for participants, particularly the Park and Ride facilities, the cinema and the main leisure centre for the city as well as the football grounds.

As this trip occurred as we were moving to lockdown, we were limited to working with volunteers and carers. The route included some discussion about the range of ways this route could be navigated but we were keen to utilise the Park and Ride Service.

The public facilities of key venues were explored informally, and key issues were around bus stops and the challenging placement of these as well as some examples of good practice, particularly at the Peak, in creating welcoming and broadly dementia friendly environment with intergenerational social opportunities.



Citizen Audit #4 route parts by bus (dashes) and walking (dots)



# Vue to the Peak: Citizen Audit Overview

Meeting Places	Finding Your Way	Surfaces	Places to Sit
<p>Appropriate places, cafes, and waiting spaces [on this route] and the bus proved to be a good place to catch up with friends!</p>	<p>Lack of signage on bus route in general and timetable was printed too small.</p>	<p>Surfaces and pavements at the Peak were much better than those near the Vue, where the lights and paving needed repair.</p>	<p>Some seating was more comfortable than others. Lack of shelter and seating at bus stops.</p>
Things to See and Do	Stories or Memories	Worries	Best Bits
<p>Climbing wall, swimming pool, ice- rink all provide relaxed opportunities to be a spectator or participate in accessible activities. The Peak offers opportunities for intergenerational socializing. Cinema and sports village for entertainment. Morrison's for shopping and plenty places to eat.</p>	<p><i>Safeways!</i> The old supermarket. Still quite new places, Rainbow Slides!</p>	<p>Length of walk from the buses to buildings. Distance without opportunity for rest, and lack of clear signage.</p>	<p>WhatsApp group, live walks, relaxed cinema screenings and possible Dementia Friends for Vue staff.</p>

*Journey audit information recorded using the 'Sketch and Scribble' Audit Tool*





# Citizen Audit #4: Vue to the Peak



**Recording Sheet**

Name *Group Discussion* *climbly invited to speculate*

Start of Route or Meeting Point *Bus to the Peak*

How did you get here? *Park and Ride*

Route - Where do you go from here? *walk to morrison's (no time limit for parking)*

Do you know where the nearest public toilets are? *quite visible*

Yes  No

Where are they? *just before barriers on rights*

On a scale of comfortable (5) to very uncomfortable (1), can you rate how this place makes you feel? *3 1/2*

*cold air through doors* **1 2 3 4 5** *very clean bright colour scheme options for sitting in*

Can you find information at the place easily (5) highest (1) lowest, can you rate how this place makes you feel? *different area*

*signage unclear good* **1 2 3 4 5** *could make a welcoming reception*

Do you feel relaxed (5) or anxious (1), can you rate how this place makes you feel? *stimulating & engaging sign rather than relaxing*

**1 2 3 4 5**


Do you find this place welcoming, from (5) very welcoming to (1) very unfriendly

**1 2 3 4 5**

[www.ourconnectedneighbourhoods.org.uk](http://www.ourconnectedneighbourhoods.org.uk)

*anxious* *relaxed* *engaged* *stimulated* *overwhelmed*

<p><b>Our Connected Neighbourhoods</b></p> <p><b>Audit Journey Sketch &amp; Scribble</b></p> <p>Route: <i>Vue to Peak (via bus)</i></p>	<p><b>Meeting Places</b></p> <p><i>appropriate meeting places cafes and waiting spaces outside the Peak the bus!!</i></p>	<p><b>Finding your way</b></p> <p><i>lack of signage on bus route generally fine table too small</i></p>
<p><b>Surfaces</b> (windows, pavement, materials)</p> <p><i>Surfaces and pavements at the Peak much better than at the Vue where lights and pavement need repairs</i></p>	<p><b>Places to sit</b></p> <p><i>Some more comfortable than others lack of shelters and seats at bus stops</i></p>	<p><b>Things to do</b></p> <p><i>climbly wall swamped kids ice rink? socialising at the Peak intergenerational cinema sports village morrison's for shopping places to eat</i></p>
<p><b>Stories or memories</b></p> <p><i>safeways! still quite new places, rainbow slides</i></p>	<p><b>Worries</b></p> <p><i>Length of walk from buses to buildings Distinct signage!</i></p>	<p><b>Best bits</b></p> <p><i>any well group relaxed cinema serangs possible dementia friends</i></p>

 Parking and Bus Stops are actually quite far from the Vue entrance, sometimes it floods outside, and the parking meters are far from the disabled car parking spaces

For this route we trialled using the recording sheet and tools as a group rather than in pairs or individually. It helped the small group focus our conversations and identified a lot of consistent feedback.

This is a newer area of town so evokes less memories, but this is an important connecting route for a range of important leisure activities. The bus and pedestrian infrastructure could be upgraded to improve resident and visitor experience, making a whole series of opportunities more dementia friendly.

# Citizen Audit #4: Vue to the Peak

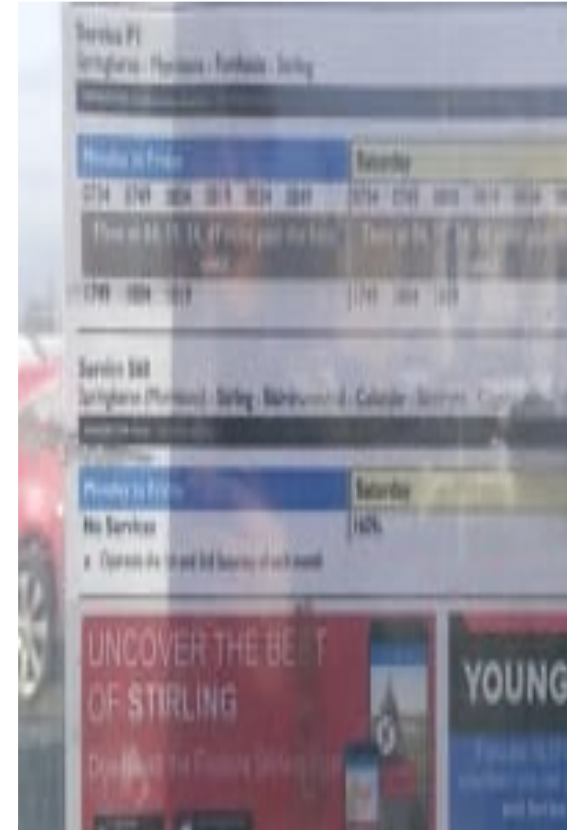
The leisure venues along this route had features that were welcoming and often, as in the case of the Peak, already quite dementia friendly. The Park and Ride provides a welcome stress-reduced and quick way for some people to get into the town centre.




A visit to the Vue highlighted acoustic issues experienced by some people, but there was a comfortable seating area, and customer service was helpful. We learned that they already run *Relaxed Events* and have an interest in becoming dementia friendly.



Taking the Park and Ride bus service provided social opportunity for our carers and volunteers




 Use of signage at bus stop could be improved, in the same ways as at Bus Station audit




# Citizen Audit #4: Vue to the Peak

This is a major leisure route for residents and tourists and the group identified issues around active travel and wayfinding.




 Pedestrian crossings around the Vue are inadequate, as is some paving




 Example of a bus stop with no seating and very limited space



 Unclear signage and lack of differentiation between pedestrian and cycle spaces near the Peak can cause confusion and risk of collision



 Wayfinding from the city to the Peak could be improved

# The Peak: Citizen Review

The overall verdict from visiting the Peak was enthusiastically positive. There were similar wayfinding challenges as for other building in getting there, but better once inside. The open-plan layout with high levels of visual access into adjacent spaces provides things to see and more opportunity for social interaction. However, this also meant there were high levels of noise- which can be disabling for many people with dementia. The main conclusions from the audit here were:

## Positives

- Well laid out space
- Bright contrasting furniture and signage
- Zones for different activities and places to sit
- Information easy to find
- Intergenerational meeting point
- Lots of things to do and see

## Suggestions

- Investigate means to reduce high noise levels
- Provide a clearer route from the bus stops
- External signage, wayfinding and bus stop shelter not as good as they could be

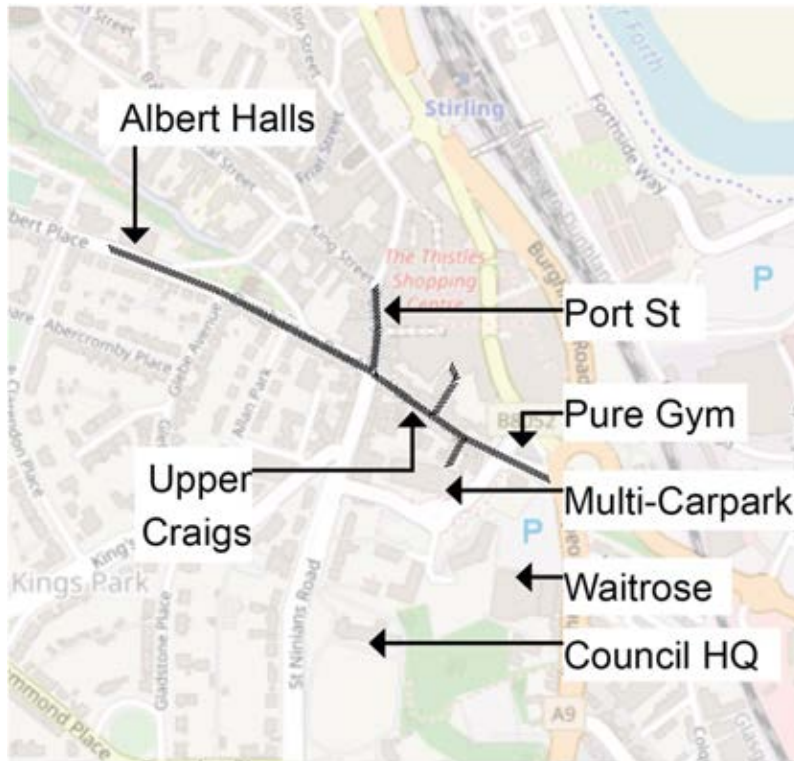


Bright welcoming furniture at the Peak reinforces the 'fun' identity of venue. However queue ropes are less welcoming. Hard surfaces means that any noise can be loud – impeding some people from hearing or joining in group conversation.



The space offers helpful stimulus through choices of lighting, mood, and things to watch. It provides inter-generational social opportunity and things to talk about. It invites people to see various physical activities – encouraging them to consider having a go.

# Citizen Audit #5: Digital Audit – Upper Craigs



*Map of the extent of streetscape reviewed by the Citizen Audit Group as part of an online video conference discussion.*

*Map underlay obtained from [www.openstreetmap.org](http://www.openstreetmap.org)*

The COVID-19 lockdown led to the cancellation of the original environmental audit walk #5 to the Top of the Town.

The group subsequently agreed, at the request of Stirling Council, to review design proposals for the regeneration the Upper Craigs. However they decided to combine this with a 'virtual' group audit of the streetscape of Upper Craigs and nearby streets.

The regeneration proposals were shared in advance of the discussion allowing citizens to reviewed the regeneration proposals in advance of discuss them.

The 'virtual' group audit of Upper Craigs involved a digital walk-around using *Google Streetview* via screenshare to support discussion. Topic of conversation revolved around the established walking audit tool queries, as well as issues raised by the regeneration proposals.

Feedback specific to Upper Craigs is reported in the following pages whereas broader findings with respect to paving and other topics relevant to other areas of the city are incorporated into other sections of this report.

# Proposal for Upper Craigs: Citizen Group Review

Stirling Council asked the Citizen Audit Group to review draft proposals to upgrade the streetscape of the central Stirling street of **Upper Craigs**. They provided the drawings opposite and summary description below:

**Road opened-up for One-way traffic:** East Bound.

**Parking/Loading:** Same number, all moved to one side.

**Segregated Cycleway:** One way (West). Cyclists travelling East to share the road.

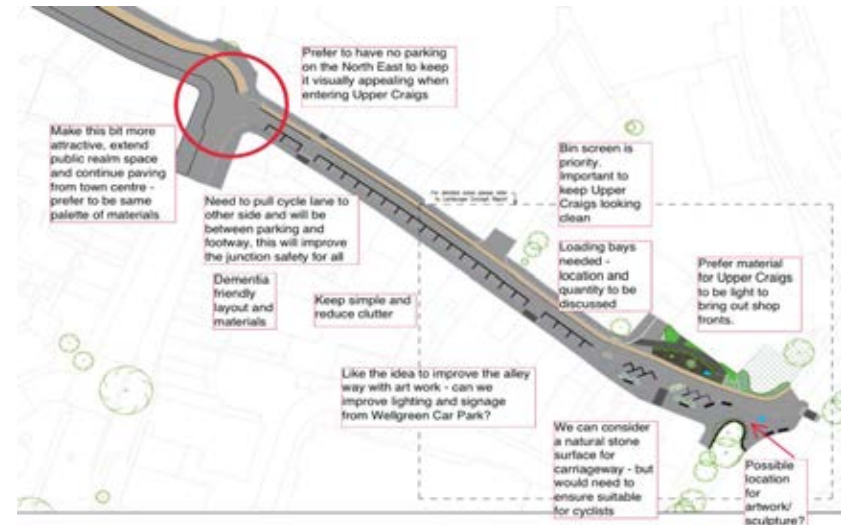
**Speed Restriction:** 20mph zone.

More space at East End for tables/chairs/bin screens.

**Pedestrian Priority:** Footways continue across junctions. (Comments on the drawing from other groups shown).

**Questions posed for Discussion:**

- Changing a parking space to a 'parklet'?
- What materials to use for the footpaths and road?
- Natural stone, tarmac or something else?
- Are there enough crossing points?
- Is traffic calming such as speed humps required?
- Ideas for the alley between Wellgreen Car Park and Upper Craigs?
- Ideas for Artwork/lighting?
- Is there enough greenery proposed?



*Layout drawing provided to the group for comment*



*Sketches for Upper Craigs (via Stirling Council)*

# Proposal for Upper Craigs: Citizen Group Review

Overall, the group was very supportive of the regeneration proposals, with the primary concern being the effects of an increase in both the volume, and the speed, of traffic on this street. Both factors are known to cause considerable increases in stress for some people living with dementia.

The proposed 20km speed limit is supported but felt it would still be essential to ensure the re-design of the street includes clear physical measures to make sure this is obeyed by drivers. Frequently narrowing sections of carriageway and installing raised pedestrian crossings at these locations would help. These would preferably be located on/near pedestrian desire lines.

The planned increase in planting is supported – and the group suggested continuing this into port Street and locations in the town centre, which can currently feel 'hard' and unwelcoming. Some referred to examples from places they have visited – and supported the positive impact that even plastic 'lawn' can make to how welcoming a street feels.

The broader '*Streetview*' audit for this area identified issues with existing paving, signage, crossing points. Feedback on these was added into broader feedback in other areas of this report.

## Parking:

Although this area has plenty of parking overall, with the Thistle Centre carpark, the Wellgreen carpark, and the Waitrose carpark all in close-proximity there is a lack of suitable allocated disabled, priority, short stay delivery and drop-off parking spaces in close proximity to local premises accessed by disabled people. The group suggested this kind of parking should be enhanced in key locations on Upper Craigs, especially near the citizens advice office, access panel offices etc.

More able-bodied people should be ok to park further away but may need signage to improve awareness of other parking. So, measures to improve and encourage pedestrian access to and from the Wellgreen Carpark will be critical to help reduce the parking demand on Upper Craigs itself.



# Proposal for Upper Craigs: Wellgreen Alley

Finding the way into the alley leading to Wellgreen carpark may be difficult. The sign to Wellgreen blends in with the adjacent shop front. The access to City Tailors is more eye catching and more inviting from a distance. Wrought iron is dull – and feels un-inviting/defensive making people less likely to feel comfortable entering the alley way from Upper Craigs.

The alley is possibly even harder to find from the Wellgreen end, as it is accessed through a hole in a wall as if going into someone's garden, rather than a public laneway. However, signage here is better. Ideally the alley should have some more active shops and other life to make it feel safer. Better lighting and artwork could also help here.

The images below were taken during the 'virtual' environmental audit session are screengrabs from the use of *Google Streetview* as an aid to discussion.



The alley leading to Wellgreen carpark is not obvious or easy to find.



The entrance to the alley is uninviting. Signage blends into the shop front.



The southern access point to the alley is even harder to spot – although the signs are slightly better.



The alley is narrow, lifeless (and dark at night) so doesn't feel safe.



# Proposal for Upper Craigs: Citizen Group Review

## **Pedestrian and Social Space**

The proposed widening of pavement areas, and the inclusion of parklets and opportunities for outdoor seating are welcomed. The group suggested a preference to locate most of these 'slow' spaces on the northern side of the street to maximise solar exposure to 'people' areas. This would increase the comfort in using these spaces and therefore increase the likelihood of them being used and valued.

The proposed enhanced space for gathering in small groups on the street will help the local community to enjoy the street and get to know each other. The proposed provision for cycle parking should also help to reduce car traffic. An additional bike share station may also help people to make more sustainable travel choices.

Further measures which encourage pedestrianism in the wider area will also help. However the group acknowledged that the location of this street creates two problems for improving pedestrianism. Its position relative to the back of the Thistles shopping complex (without any current entry from this side) and being 'hemmed in' (in the SE direction) by several busy, fast, and wide car-orientated roads.

There was agreement with the suggestion (by others) to locate the contra-flow bike path on the footpath side of parked cars – so that people on bikes are also facing people sitting in their cars to further reduce the risk of 'dooring'. The current proposals also have the protected bike lane on the unorthodox RHS side (in the direction of travel) so may be confusing for many people.

Large scale artwork at street ends to help people orientate to location/destination. These could act as welcome 'Gateway' markers to people arriving in the city – and be useful for wayfinding if visible from some distance.





# Making Stirling a Dementia Friendly City Strand 2: Design Review of Council Buildings



# Strand 2: Design Review of Council Buildings <sup>p51</sup>



Map of suggested audit venues provided by Stirling Council (Nov 2019)

Audits of public buildings took place in two stages. In the first stage, five key buildings identified by Stirling Council were reviewed by dementia design experts from the DSDC at the University of Stirling. They produced a detailed illustrated report for each of these five buildings.

In the second stage, these five council buildings were visited and audited by our panel of citizen auditors, either as part of workshop activities or as the start or end points of journey audits between these and other public buildings undertaken for Stage 1.

Summary findings of both citizen audits, DSDC dementia design reviews were discussed as part of workshops with the group giving collective direction on a final list of prioritized changes for each council building.

The following pages summarize the DSDC review at each site and follow this with outcomes of the Citizen Audit Team review.



# DSDC Design Assessment Process

In advance of the Citizen Audit Team getting under way, the University of Stirling's DSDC had commenced professional assessments of dementia design quality at five key Stirling Council Buildings – as agreed with the Council at project commencement.

As a follow up to this the Citizen Audit Group planned separate visits to the same buildings as part of the program of environment audits undertaken by the group. The citizen group subsequently reviewed both sets of audit findings for each venue – identifying a short, prioritised list of preferred improvements for each of the five buildings.

Three buildings had 'Detailed' reviews, using the checklist from the DSDC's *Dementia Design Audit Tool for Public Buildings*. Two further buildings received 'Light' reviews, with evidence-based commentary provided against a series of photos.

Council Building	Light Review	Detailed Review
Albert Halls	●	
Bus Station		●
Central Library		●
Customer First	●	
The Tolbooth		●



The following pages provide a summary of findings from the DSDC design reviews, followed by a summary of the findings of the Citizen Audit Team conclusions and recommendations after reviewing the DSDC reports and undertaking their own group audit of the five identified council buildings.



# Albert Halls: DSDC Dementia Design Review

## DSDC Summary Findings:

Albert Halls is well located and has relatively good accessibility considering the age and style of the building. The building is attractive and welcoming in appearance but may be difficult to identify for those who don't know it. Lighting levels and colour contrasts are likely to be the main challenges for visitors with dementia or age-related sight loss – especially at flooring transitions and in the toilet areas. Visual access by main entrance is very good. Signage is good in some areas but poor in others including the accessible entrance area. Overall Audit Score – 55.0%

## DSDC's Key Recommended Improvements

1. Artificial Lighting Levels
2. Floor Contrasts
3. Other Contrasts: e.g. seating, toilets, sinks.
4. Signage: OK but lots of room for improvement
5. Acoustics (both halls)
6. Physical Access: e.g. Stair handrails stop short

These summary points are taken from a 'light review' of dementia design at this venue, undertaken by the University of Stirling's Dementia Services Development Centre (DSDC).



# Albert Halls: DSDC Key Recommendations

DSDC Key Recommendations for Improvement Works to improve visitor experience:

- 1. Light:** *The overall luminance levels in circulation spaces are very low (recorded at 29 lux at its lowest). As the eye ages it can require 2-3 times as much light as younger eyes and take longer to adjust to changes in light. Poor or inconsistent lighting can increase risk of falls as person with dementia attempts adjust. Increasing lighting levels in entrance halls will help mediate the drastic change in light between exterior (5000+ lux) and interior light levels. More evenly distributed, and higher luminance levels should also be considered throughout the accessible route and on the stairs where a higher risk of falls is likely. Pooling of light and dark patches created by wall sconces and uneven distribution of light can make the floor look uneven, reducing confidence in walking for those with dementia or a sight impairment.*
- 2. Floor Contrasts:** *It is very important that tonal continuity is provided between adjoining areas of flooring where there is not a change in level between them. A change in tone can be perceived as a step and thus cause high stepping and an increased risk of falls. Between the entrance hall carpeting and the wooden main hall flooring, for example, there is a difference of 33-39 LRV (range due to timber grain). This difference in tone should be less than 10 LRV to ensure tonal continuity. In some cases changing a threshold to a non-metallic alternative with similar tonal value as the adjoining floors would be all that is required.*
- 3. Other Contrasts:** *Although the colour scheme is in keeping with buildings of its age and of traditional theatre spaces, a greater degree of tonal contrast would be greatly beneficial between the walls and floors, between dining furniture and floors, and between doors and walls. The floor was recorded at 1 LRV and wall at 20 LRV. There should be at least 30 LRV (Light Reflectance Value) difference between certain finishes.*
- 4. Signage:** *Existing signage tends to be located solely in circulation space. Adding signs directing people from within the rooms themselves could be beneficial, for example to the toilets or the exit door. This is especially important when surrounded on three sides by visually similar fire doors (i.e. in the Main Hall).*
- 5. Acoustics:** *The extent of hard surfaces in the Main Hall mean that acoustics are poor, reducing the ability of people with dementia to hear, communicate and enjoy activities in the space. Professionally designed sound insulation/baffles will help improve experience -and broaden the types of events that can be held in the venue.*

# Albert Halls: Citizen Review

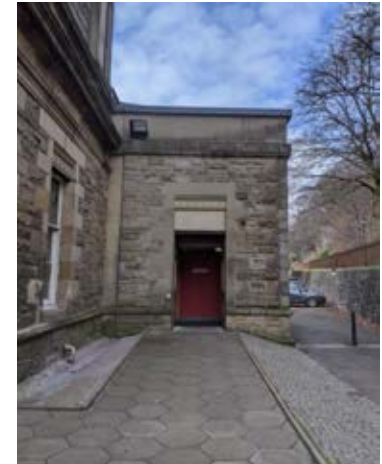
The citizen group feedback on the Albert hall emphasised positive attributes of the venue. They broadly agreed with the recommendations for improvements from DSDC review. The group also commented on aspects of their experience, such as customer service, not covered by the DSDC format. Key findings were as follows:

## Positives

- Good Visual Access (into Café etc)
- Comfortable Cafe
- Helpful Friendly Staff
- Familiar/Recognisable Interior
- Good Location (for most)
- Like the historical images on display

## Required Improvements

- Parking - more disabled spaces
- Toilet refurbishments
- Remove glare on signs/walls
- Public Transport Access (consider an extra bus stop)
- Add seating in other areas – especially by accessible entry
- Remove ticket office doors to improve accessibility
- Add visibility to ticket office from north entrance
- Improve acoustics in both halls
- Revise mirror positions (lift/toilets)



Good disabled/level access entry is let down by lack of/poorly located signage.



Toilet spaces in need of refurbishment



Issues of glare with internal signage

# Albert Halls: Citizen Review

1. **Getting to the Albert Halls:** is ok by car and travel is not bad coming from town centre. The walk from the nearest bus stop is too far for some people.
2. **Staffing:** The Albert Halls and Cafe staff are helpful, and the cafe is particularly welcoming. If there is a show on there are usually staff in place to help assist. Its less welcoming coming to a small event such as in the lesser hall or for less formal events.
3. **Doors:** It can be hard to know how to get through some doors if they don't have a 'push' or 'pull' indicator. Seeing through a glazed door can help wayfinding, as can leaving solid doors open when they don't need to be closed. Doors to important rooms, fire doors and cupboards are often the same colour making it difficult to know which is which.
4. **Signage:** Signage for the accessible entrance is not obvious. Metallic and glossy plastic signs are too shiny – causing problems with glare. High level signage may be useful when the building is busy during an event, but lower level signage would be easier to find and read the rest of the time.
5. **Handrails:** Should start from the bottom of stairs. Some only start a few steps up.
6. **Acoustics:** not very good for conversations/meetings in either main hall.
7. **Toilets:** Disabled loos not well organised and accessible. Doors in the toilets blend in with the walls, but lighting overhead for each stall is good.
8. **Lighting:** Lighting in some areas needs to be brighter. Glare from the lighting, rather than lack of brightness, is more problematic in some areas. Finding your way out of the upper gallery in the main hall might need some extra lighting.



Artworks and displays help bring out the rich heritage, create topics of conversation, and add to wayfinding cues.



# Bus Station: DSDC Dementia Design Review

## Summary Findings:

Stirling Bus Station is centrally located close to the city centre shopping area. It provides welcome warm shelter for those waiting for public transport with easy visibility to nearby stances through large glazed panels. Toilets, seating, and a café provide valuable, if basic, indoor comfort. The main challenges for people with dementia are likely to be wayfinding to, from, and around the Bus Station, distress in accessing and/or understanding time tabling information, and general discomfort whilst waiting, including noise (inside) and social discomfort (outside).

## DSDC Recommended Improvements

1. Improve Bus Information: Times, Stances, Destinations
2. Signage: to and from other locations in the city
3. Décor/Furniture is currently clinical & uncomfortable
4. Flooring: reflective finish & tonal issues (dark holes)
5. Noise: air-conditioner, café machines, hard surfaces

## Others

- Outdoor Seating (comfort)
- Clarity of where to wait/queue

These summary points are taken from a detailed dementia design assessment of the venue, based on the research evidenced Dementia Design Audit Tool, undertaken by the University of Stirling's Dementia Services Development Centre (DSDC).



# Bus Station: DSDC Key Recommendations

DSDC Key Recommendations for improvement works to improve visitor experience:

**1. Timetable Information:** *Timetabling information is complex and often in small print. Making these larger and clearer, along with live information digital screens and verbal announcements would make this information more accessible to all.*

**2. Wayfinding:** *The main issue with respect to dementia and tourist friendly design in the city is way-finding between buildings. As the Bus Station (along with the Train station) is one of the primary points of arrival to and departure from the city then wayfinding to key locations in the city leading from Stirling Bus Station, and then back again, is a particularly important matter. Currently it is not clear to the pedestrian how to locate the entrance when arriving at the bus station – it only identified by the presence of buses. Similarly when within the bounds of the station it is not clear which external doors to use. The signage system used to help customers find the stances lacks clarity and consistency. Improving the current signage scheme would be beneficial for directing both tourists and people living with a cognitive impairment.*

**3. Interior Design:** *The building itself could be enhanced further by small alterations to material finishes, decor and furniture to make the space more welcoming and comfortable for customers. The multi-tonal flooring possibly provides the greatest difficulty as it potentially poses increased risks of falls and perceptual issues for people with dementia or sight loss.*

**4. Place Making:** *The addition of more artwork and welcoming clear information boards would also help to create a more relaxing feel for those waiting, and for new arrivals to the city.*

**5. Noise:** *Acoustically the interior space is likely to be challenging for people with dementia, as hard surfaces combined with noise from mechanical units can cause reverberation and high levels of background noise, making verbal communication especially challenging.*

# Bus station: Citizen Audit Overview

Meeting Places	Finding Your Way	Surfaces	Places to Sit
<p>A cold space. Good space to talk with people. Stood for long time in shelter for next bus, cold/wet. Too far to walk back to terminal for some. People in the terminal communicating in a friendly way.</p>	<p>Lack of information boards Willing and helpful staff in. Having to ask for information Helpful customer service/ writing information down.</p>	<p>Flat and easy to walk on. Some slabs uneven for those with mobility issues. Not wide enough to navigate around people and manhole covers.</p>	<p>Plenty of seating inside terminal Bus shelters not a good place to sit in bad weather. Shelters outside open to the elements. Perched seating in shelters not good.</p>
Things to See and Do	Stories or Memories	Worries	Best Bits
<p>Nothing to see or do Can't see relevant information. People watching. Meeting acquaintances.</p>	<p>Buses were always cold and grubby</p>	<p>Several causes of anxiety: Waiting to get on the bus; Concern about safety; Really cold/wet; Concerns about being next to the road on the other side of bus shelter waiting for instructions from bus drivers; Difficulty boarding the bus; Having to change buses without explanation</p>	<p>Staff on enquiry desk were helpful. No further best bits. (Cold/wet/confused/anxious).</p>

*Journey audit information on Stirling Bus Station recorded using the 'Sketch and Scribble' Audit Tool*

# Bus Station: Citizen Review

Repeated visits to Stirling Bus Station as part of the project provided opportunity to add to findings from one visit to the next. With some carers undertaking reviews from the perspective of that the person they care, it quickly became clear that many people with dementia would simply be unable to cope with a visit to the bus station –even when accompanied. The primary concerns were around the high degree of difficulty experienced in obtaining, understanding, and acting upon travel information. However, as most members of the group overcame this problem by talking to bus station staff, who received much praise, the individuals in the group can then experience high levels of stress and anxiety at times when staff help is not available. Recoding sheet responses on one visit captured experiences (right) ranging from 1-4 on the 5-point Likert scale. Two lists below summarise group’s audit findings.

**Positives**

- Good City location
- Good physical access
- Great staff assistance (mostly)
- Clean and bright
- Toilets are easy to find
- Good visual access (inside)
- Bus Station acts as social hub

**Areas for Improvement**

- Better, clearer, travel information
- Live ‘next bus’ displays
- Live info on the buses themselves
- Provide station and route maps
- Provide a quiet waiting area
- Bus drivers’ customer service
- Safety at night

	Level of Comfort				
	1	2	3	4	5
P1c				X	
P2p			X		
P3p	X				
P4c			X		

	Ease of Access to Info.				
	1	2	3	4	5
P1c				X	
P2p			X		
P3p		X			
P4c			X		

	Relaxed to Anxious				
	1	2	3	4	5
P1c				X	
P2p			X		
P3p		X			
P4c			X		

	Unfriendly vs Welcoming				
	1	2	3	4	5
P1c			X		
P2p					
P3p		X			
P4c	X				



# Bus Station: Citizen Review



Barriers in place when kiosk is closed make it impossible to read info board. Also default kiosk should be the most accessible one on left.



Graphics on the rear wall are attractive and break up visual monotony. Consider more place-making wall art or exhibitions.



Consider priority drop off stopping for disabled people outside the travel hub. Several areas around the station have paving contrast issues.



Improve internal and external signage pointing to the travel hub, shopping centre, shop mobility and buses/trains to improve wayfinding.



Stance numbering can be confusing. Could reverse numbers be blanked? Buses are numbered so letters for stances may be easier to remember.



Information boards are not welcoming - dominated by negative images and messages. Helpful information is too small to read.

# Bus Station: Citizen Review images



The main wayfinding signage for the bus station is too far from the station to be useful (near the train station). More explicit versions of this information close to and within the bus station would be helpful.



Some signage becomes more obvious once the destination is reached – but would be much more useful to see before this point.

“Numbers or letters on Buses?”



History and artwork in the Station, “An exhibition opportunity”



Despite the glazed roof and upright screens, it is uncomfortable to wait outdoors near the stands in poor weather.

# Central Library: DSDC Review

## Summary Findings:

The Central Library is well located in the city centre – with spaces and services to suit the needs of a diverse audience.

However significant problems with both physical accessibility and lack of customer toilet provision make the library unvisitable by some, and most likely uncomfortable for many.

## Positives:

The main library space is a welcoming space with high levels of good quality natural light. Wide well laid out aisles and low-level bookcases make the main space easy to navigate and move around. Good workspaces and comfortable seating are available.

## DSDC Recommended Improvements

1. Physical Access
2. Lack of Toilets
3. Signage
4. Visual Clutter incl. furniture placement, leaflets etc
5. Flooring some issues with flooring contrast

These summary points are taken from a detailed dementia design assessment of the venue, based on the research evidenced Dementia Design Audit Tool, undertaken by the University of Stirling's Dementia Services Development Centre (DSDC).



# Central Library: Citizen Review

The team concurred that the Central Library is an important and recognisable Stirling landmark, and is valued as providing an important role in the community. The interior is considered bright, calm, and welcoming.

However the lack of level or lift access, and the non-availability of toilet access (despite there being toilets in the building) causes difficulties for visiting – or need to carefully plan their visit so they know where the nearest toilet is located. (e.g. Codebase or Albert Halls)

## Positives

- Good Location
- Quiet Ambience & Feels 'Cosy'
- Clean and Bright
- Good overall layout
- Very helpful staff
- Recognisable spaces
- Local artwork/artefacts

## Required Improvements:

- Physical level access
- Access to toilets

(As a temporary measure consider adding clear information about accessing toilets in other nearby council buildings).

The layout of the space, low shelving, extent of glazing make for a bright pleasant space that is easy to orientate in.





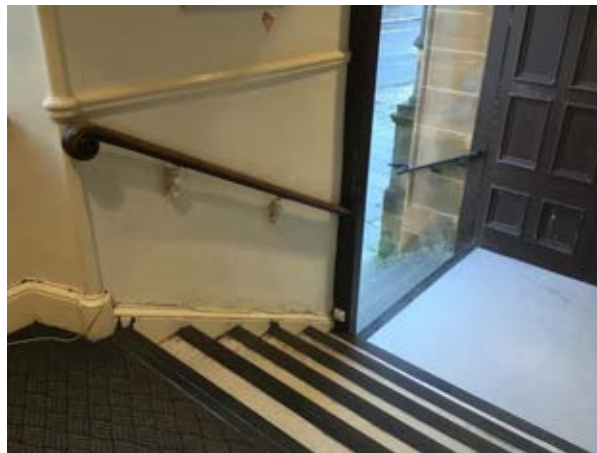
# Central Library: Citizen Review

p65

(photos borrowed from DSDC)



Some key signage is too small and too high up.



Physical access is limited to those with good mobility and the strength to climb at least two flights of stairs.



Helpful signage and visual access through glazing is obscured by less important info.



Comfortable seating but difficult to move around them.



There are toilets in the building, but off limits to customers.



Contrast issues cause perceptual problems for some people.



Low shelving and a variety of furniture allows flexibility for many different activities.

# Customer First: DSDC Review

## Summary Findings:

Customer First is well located in the city centre amidst the main shopping areas and close to transport hubs. It is easy to find and provides excellent physical and visual access. Signage and branding is visually clear but may be misinterpreted. There are some potential trip hazards in the flooring, and toilet access policy is unhelpful to older people or those with dementia

## Positives:

The simple layout and high levels of glazing make the space bright and easy to see and understand. The interiors of the toilets are the most dementia friendly of Stirling Council venues. Overall, this this physical venue is quite accessible, with any minor shortfalls being relatively easy to address.

## DSDC Recommended Improvements

1. Flooring has a minor trip hazard
2. Name/Graphics to help identify venue function
3. Toilets locked and lacking signage
4. Improve artificial lighting towards the rear
5. Skirting colour contrast to help see the space

## Others issues

- Poor visibility of low-level window signs
- Information leaflets rack may be difficult to access
- Customer service could be more welcoming

These summary points are taken from a 'light review' of dementia design at this venue, undertaken by the University of Stirling's Dementia Services Development Centre (DSDC).



# Customer First: Citizen Review

## Overview

The citizen audit group agreed with the broad findings of the DSDC review of the physical environment at Customer First concurring on most positives and areas for improvement.

However, even though the focus of this program of place audits was physical environment, several members of the wider citizen group cited previous negative experiences when visiting Customer First as reason to suggest that improvements to customer service becomes the top priority for improvements at the venue. In fact this previous experience was enough to deter all but one person with dementia from attending a specially arranged audit visit to the venue.

## Citizen Identified Positives

- Good Location/Transport
- Good Physical and Visual Access
- Payment machine is easy to use
- Toilet design has good colours & contrast

## Key Improvements

- Improve Customer Experience
- Cues upon entering: What to do? Who to speak to?
- Provide clearer info on what services are available
- Relocate information leaflets to within easy reach

## Others

- Bring back tourist information
- Enhance the visibility of low-level window signs
- Improve the experience of the lift
- Check-in machine/ticketing could be clearer
- Better signpost to other services (incl. non-council)



Toilets provides good contrasts



Machine is easy to use

# Tolbooth: DSDC Review

## Summary Findings:

The Tolbooth is an 'A' listed building with an unconventional layout and a robust aesthetic from the mix of old stone and newer metal elements. The performance spaces are well lit with good acoustics, but other areas including stairs, corridors, and café/bar are dark and unlikely to be acoustically comfortable for many people with dementia. The 3-dimensional nature of wayfinding may be confusing for some. Signage may be hard to read – and is not always well placed. Perforated metal decks are likely to be problematic to walk on, but this could be helped with adjustments to lighting. Some issues with contrasts, including absence of contrasting stair nosings.

## DSDC Recommended Improvements

1. Lighting Levels in foyer, corridors and on stairs
2. Wayfinding signage placement & style
3. Bar/Café acoustics
4. Perforated walkway surfaces (lighting?)
5. Contrasts e.g stair-nosings, thresholds

## Others

- Visual Clutter around Reception
- Lack of Foyer Seating

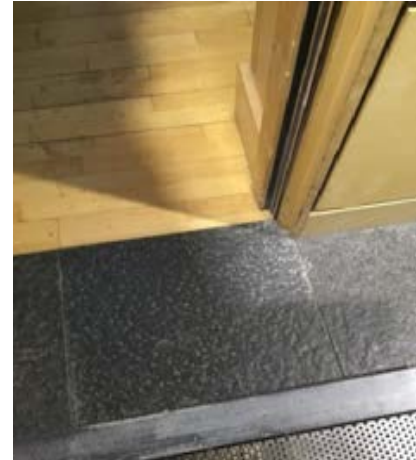
These summary points are taken from a 'light review' of dementia design at this venue, undertaken by the DSDC.



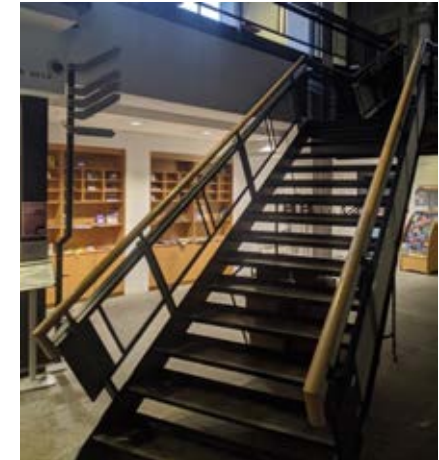
Signage style is distinct, but difficult to read



Removing one of the three colours may help



Flooring contrasts and perforated landing decks may cause perceptual problems



Open risers and lack of contrasting stair nosings may affect user confidence and balance

# The Tolbooth: Citizen Review

The Tolbooth was first visited by the Citizen Audit Team as part of the initial project planning workshop. A second more detailed audit visit was planned but had to be cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions. Some auditing occurred during this visit, and the building was discussed further using photos and the DSDC report later.

Some members of the group had never visited the Tolbooth before, so could offer some excellent insight. Although there were many positive aspects of the building noted regarding the aesthetics, performance spaces, friendly staff, and history of the building; various challenges, including wayfinding, lighting, and potential noise levels in other spaces mean that people with dementia are currently less likely to enjoy a visit to the Tolbooth (say compared to the Albert Halls).

## Positives

- Recognisable building
- Memorable characterful Interior
- Great views from the upper floors
- Helpful staff
- Good acoustics and lighting in activity spaces



Performance spaces are bright with good acoustics.

## Areas for Improvement

- Issues with signage
- Unease crossing perforated decking
- Lift can be hard to find and confusing to use.
- Lighting in communal/movement spaces

## Others

- Uncertainty about parking
- Difficult to access via public transport

# Tolbooth: Citizen Review

p70

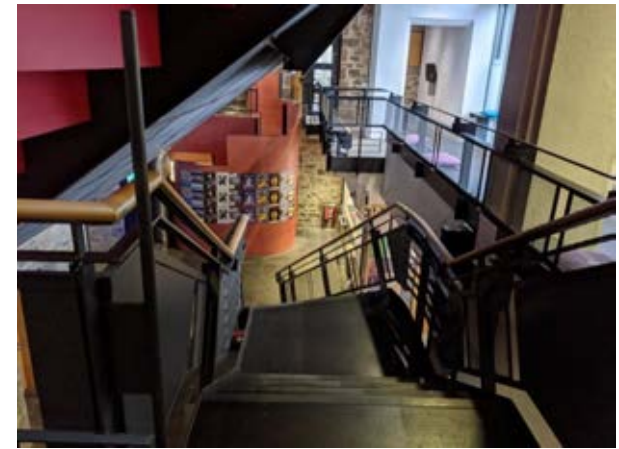
(photos borrowed from DSDC)



The building is distinct and recognisable, aided by the canopy leading to the main entry.



The building makes good use of glazing at upper floors for nice views and letting natural light in.



The dramatic interior is memorable but can be confusing to move around.



Some activity spaces can be difficult to identify.



Some signage is poorly located.



Lift controls are hard to see and understand.



Perforated decking can be difficult to cross.

# Cafés: Key Social Infrastructure

Undertaking outdoor audits in Scottish winter can be challenging so the program of environment audit activities included visits to several city centre Cafés. These stops provided rest, refreshment, a chance to warm up, and an excuse to use the toilets! However they quickly became a key component of the audit activities, supporting quality ad-hoc discussion of that day's audit, the overall project, and more.

Identifying the potential social value of cafés to the wider community, some members of the group undertook light-hearted reviews of the cafés they visited. This included the hunt for Stirling's best hot chocolate!

## Recommendations

Many cafés were identified as dementia friendly, with comfortable environments (seating, lighting, noise etc), welcoming and helpful staff and, of course, good quality drinks. These are posed as examples for other local organisations to follow.



Comfy spaces lead to quality conversation



Homely bright spaces aid confidence



Not hot chocolate!





# Making Stirling a Dementia Friendly City

## Suggestions and Recommendations





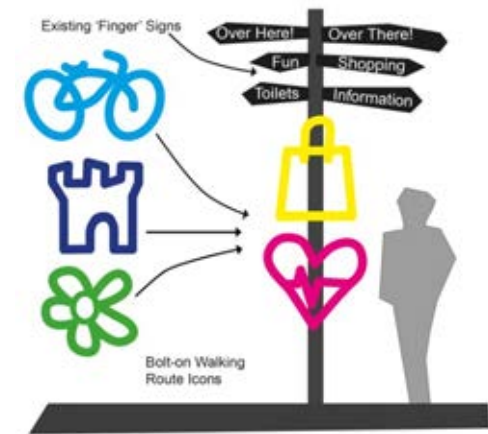
# Suggestions and Recommendations

This section summaries of the main issues raised during the audits program, and offers practical suggestions, guidance, and illustrations of positive examples across a sample of these issues.

Under the objective of developing Stirling's prospects as dementia friendly city, a list potential initiatives to consider for implementation in businesses and organizations across the city is provided. Wereports on initial mapping of the established dementia-friendly infrastructure in Stirling, being created by *Our Connected Neighbourhoods*, as a much-needed resource for local people with dementia, their families and carers. We also highlight challenges around the availability of, and access to, toilets as a cause of significant restriction on the social life and the ability to participate in the wider community for older people.

Feedback and guidance is provided on how to improve and design more helpful wayfinding and signage – alongside illustrations of some of the good examples encountered during the audits. Similar illustrated feedback is provided for artworks, and for the design or selection of appropriate furniture.

The section continues with illustrations representing some of the many ideas expressed by members of the team during audit walks, discussions, and workshops. This includes a series of concept images for a city-wide wayfinding and routes proposal named 'Inspired by Tartan'. This proposal brings together several of the recommendations from environmental audits, alongside some of the key suggestions from the group. In doing do, it creates a new visual identity for the city, that ties with existing Stirling 'Alive in Scotland' branding, and the proposed Tartan Centre.



Early idea for route icons



Developed route banner



# Building Dementia Friendly Communities

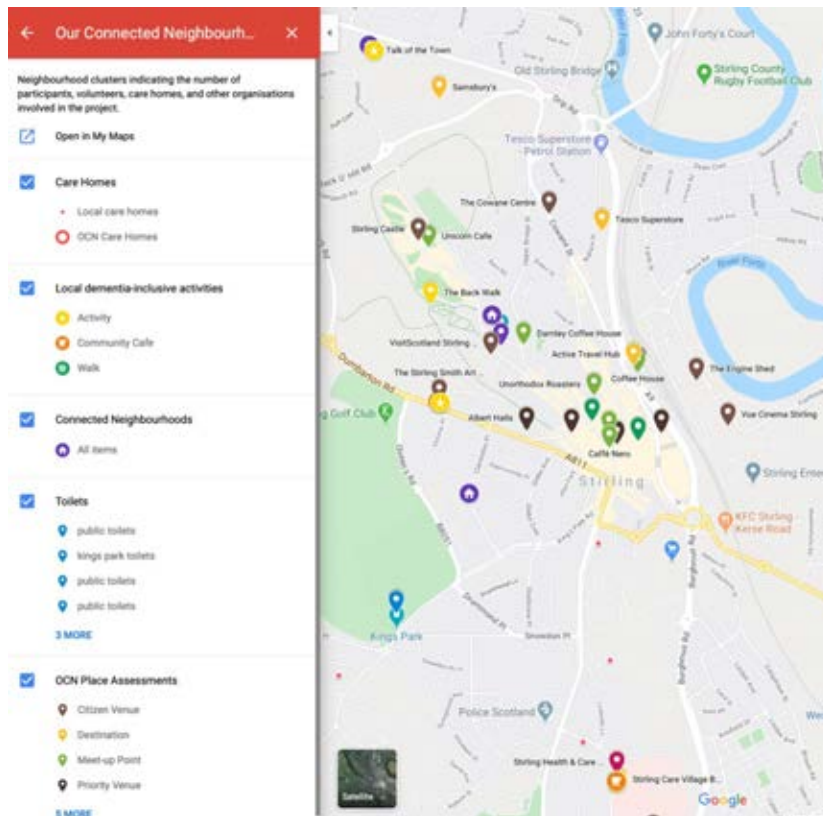
Dementia-specific initiatives can help to improve the experiences people of living with dementia. However many people with dementia prefer not to be identified or segregated based on their condition.

Conveniently, community initiatives that support varying abilities, and promote inclusion through ordinary but inclusive social experiences can make significant contributions to creating the most dementia friendly communities. These can be helpful in supporting people with dementia and their carers to be involved in, contribute to, and maintain independence within their community. Many can also help communities to build reciprocal relationships with local businesses. Here we have collated some key examples that together could help to make Stirling a more inclusive, inviting, and dementia friendly city:

Scheme	Weblink
Alzheimer's Help Card	<a href="http://www.alzscot.org/our-work/dementia-support/information-sheets/help-card">www.alzscot.org/our-work/dementia-support/information-sheets/help-card</a>
Changing Places	<a href="http://Changing-places.org">Changing-places.org</a>
Dementia Friends	<a href="http://www.alzscot.org/our-work/dementia-friendly-communities/dementia-friends-scotland">www.alzscot.org/our-work/dementia-friendly-communities/dementia-friends-scotland</a>
Dogs in Pubs	<a href="http://Dugswelcome.com">Dugswelcome.com</a>
Friendship Benches	<a href="http://www.centreforglobalmentalhealth.org/the-friendship-bench">www.centreforglobalmentalhealth.org/the-friendship-bench</a>
Great British Toilet	<a href="http://Toiletmap.org.uk">Toiletmap.org.uk</a>
Keep Safe	<a href="http://www.scotland.police.uk/keep-safe/personal-safety/keep-safe-places">www.scotland.police.uk/keep-safe/personal-safety/keep-safe-places</a>
Pianos in Public	<a href="http://Streetpianos.com">Streetpianos.com</a>
Purple Tuesday	<a href="http://Purpletuesday.org.uk">Purpletuesday.org.uk</a>
Relaxed Events	e.g. monthly at the MacRobert Centre
Relaxed Hour	e.g. Thistles Centre, Sainsbury's, or Morrison's
SES Travel Help Card	<a href="http://Sestran.gov.uk/projects/the-sestran-thistle-assistance-card/">Sestran.gov.uk/projects/the-sestran-thistle-assistance-card/</a>
Slow Shopping	<a href="http://Slowshopping.org.uk">Slowshopping.org.uk</a>
Sunflower Lanyards	<a href="http://Hiddendisabilitiesstore.com">Hiddendisabilitiesstore.com</a>
Open Meet-ups	e.g. Italian Lessons at <i>Love Brownies</i> café, King St.



# Mapping a Dementia-Friendly Stirling



Google 'My Maps' was used to collate dementia-supportive places in the community.

Online maps were used to plan project activities, prioritise audit venues, and undertake some virtual audits of city centre spaces. The group also used their local shared experiences of living with dementia, and caring for others with dementia, using maps to identify some of the existing dementia support infrastructure located in and around Stirling City Centre.

This curated collection of locations, activities, amenities, organisations, and services thought likely to be helpful for others in the community, was added to a digital map. This mapping information will form part of a collection of open-source resources to be made available through the *Our Connected Neighbourhoods* project website:

[www.ourconnectedneighbourhoods.org.uk](http://www.ourconnectedneighbourhoods.org.uk)

This mapping exercise also helped to re-emphasise the value and importance of sign-posting to relevant and helpful information as a way of improving the lives of people living with dementia – whether this is increasing awareness of the existence of formal services, of the time and place for casual support groups, or directions to the nearest toilets when out and about.

# Public Convenience

Access to toilets is a key concern for older people, especially those living with dementia. This can be particularly problematic for those who need disabled toilets – especially ‘*Changing Places*’ standard toilets. Fear of being unable to find a toilet when needed has the effect of limiting where, when, and for how long many people spend outside of their homes – effectively limiting their participation in society. Toilet provision and awareness of their locations are therefore critical to community building and citizenship.

Awareness of specific toilet locations in Stirling City Centre was amongst individuals in the Citizen Audit Team was limited. In most locations visited during environment audits the group had trouble finding nearby toilets, or signage towards them.

## Recommendations

- Increase the number of publicly accessible toilets.
- Increase the frequency, and visibility of signage to toilets in streets, parks and inside buildings.
- Open-up the toilets in **all** council run venues to free public access, and ensure they are well signed.
- Develop and support a widespread (no-purchase) access to a toilets scheme in local cafes and other businesses.



*The Great British Public Toilet Map – Why so few public toilets in Stirling City Centre?*

Older people, those living with dementia, and tourists, are disproportionately affected by lack of public toilets or directional signage towards them. Those on lower incomes are further affected by feeling unable to use cafe toilets.

# Welcome to Stirling?



**Welcome to Stirling:** The citizen audit team identified that the arrival into the Stirling city centre via either of the two main public transport hubs was not welcoming. The first views upon exiting Stirling Train station or Bus Station are unattractive as they look onto the backs of commercial buildings. The lack of high-quality artwork, architecture, or landscape leading away from here means visitors arriving by train are not provided with clear cues of which direction to go or how to find out this information. The distinct lack of clear signage, maps, digital information, creates difficulties in planning a journey to key city venues.

There is a significant need, an opportunity, for major high-quality regeneration and place making project in this of the city, orientate visitors, and to provide tourist and residents alike with a warm, memorable welcome!



# Welcome to Stirling!



Except for orientation of the exit from Stirling rail station, visitors by public transport are provided with very little information to help them orientate themselves to the city. High quality signage, and better designed pedestrian spaces could help.



Areas of the city constructed since mid 20<sup>th</sup> century tend to be more difficult to navigate. Too many streets are noisy, vehicle dominated, and difficult to navigate and hard to move around as a pedestrian.



Contemporary '3d' maps of Stirling are attractive but difficult to use for wayfinding. The introduction of themed routes supported by a combination of well-designed memorable landmarks, well-placed signage, and more conventional maps is more likely to support effective wayfinding for visitors and locals alike.

# Wayfinding Support

A key discovery by participants was that wayfinding issues for people living with dementia and their unpaid carer were often the same as or similar for people visiting the city for the first time. Tourists interviewed often could not identify the best route to the city centre. Finding your way into the city from key parking or active travel hubs such as the Bus and Train Station is problematic, with limited consideration of a clearly articulated welcome and wayfinding as befits a significant destination.

A key finding was that there were advantages to recognising the value of distinct and unique 3D items over standardised signage that 'blends in'. People participating in the audits found distinctive buildings, landmarks and features useful way-markers. In some instances the signing reinforced this place based way-finding.

People participating employed a range of different way-finding strategies to navigate, often informed by their interests and what captured their interest in the built environment in the city, including greenspaces. This included:

- Buildings
- Shops (different by individual)
- Street Art and Street Furniture
- Lighting or lack thereof

A key point was that wayfinding was adversely affected by visual clutter, starkness, lack of interesting landmarks, and poor lighting.



*The Athenaeum provides a strong visual reference and wayfinding landmark in Stirling City Centre.*

# Wayfinding Support

Cities and towns inevitably have complex layouts – creating challenges for orientation and wayfinding. Of course people who are familiar with the place, and have managed to memorise locations, landmarks, and routes may find their way around easier than others; certainly easier than visitors, tourists, and many people living with dementia. As a result many people rely heavily on wayfinding cues including signposts, maps, information boards, and other (predominately visual) elements. As the environment audits were based on journeys through around the city, wayfinding was a constant challenge and ongoing topic of conversation.

One of the most common issues was the lack of reliable signage: this included existing signage that was not easily visible, some that were unhelpful, and others that were simply out of date - and all of these combining to undermine individual confidence in independent wayfinding around the city.



Signage that is unwelcoming and where warnings dominate uneasily over helpful information.



Missing signage



Redundant and misleading signage causes doubt about the reliability of other signage

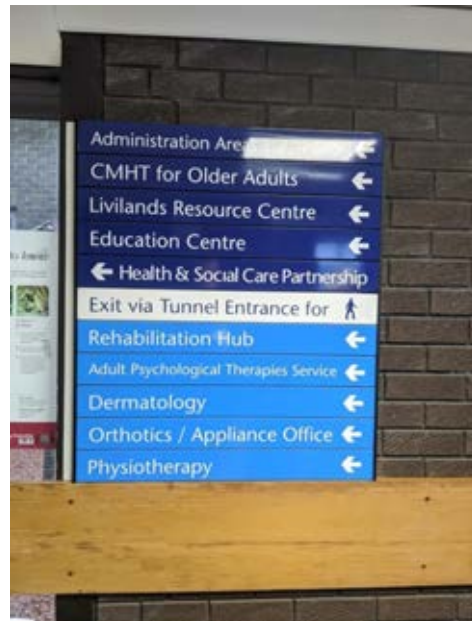


# Wayfinding Support

A lack of consistency was an issue. Even well-appointed and clear signage lost its impact and functionality if there was too much information. There were instances of both good and challenging signage throughout the city with some of the better signage to be found in hospital settings.



All capitals text and low contrast signage could be impossible to read



Signage that doesn't differentiate distance when there are a lot of destinations.



Good practice signage was often undermined by being applied in a patchy or inconsistent manner. Colour coding that was not explained can cause confusion.

# Wayfinding Support

The effectiveness of signage as an aid to wayfinding can be significantly reduced by its placement and visibility. Signage is less useful where it is not placed at locations that provide a choice of directions, where route choice decisions need to be made, or where it might be seen by the target audience. Even where signage is in the right location it is often not seen – as a result of visually blending in with the background or being set too high overhead.



Consider signage location relative to audience. Here: Signed halfway up a stairs.



Signage you can see and read from eye-level, whether you are six-foot-tall or in a wheelchair.

Locate signage at decision points. Below: Signage and map for the Back Walk, located c.40m from optimal location.



# Wayfinding Support: Seating

Seating can support a several functions for those moving around the city. It can provide meeting points and social opportunities, resting (and leaning) places which can be useful for people with limited mobility, or a contemplative space who wish to read, or make decisions about their day and journey. It also enhances the environment as a form of placemaking - inviting the public to stay, to appreciate views, artworks or nature, to people-watch and even points of interest in themselves. Stirling has some seating challenges as highlighted through the audits.



Metal (or stone) seating may be easier to maintain, but is less likely to be used as the material can be especially uncomfortable for older people.



Lack of seating opportunities can make some routes less useable by older people or those with physical impairments.



Seating positioned near talking points or attractions can help with wayfinding and provide ways of punctuating a longer walk for children or those with reduced fitness. The view or conversation at each location rewards the walker.

# Wayfinding Support: Seating

The provision of seating at intervals, key junctions, natural meeting points, and journey end points can be especially supportive to help support people getting out an about, to help maintain independence, to provide rest along their journey, and to support social connections across the community. Stone and stainless-steel seats are not comfortable to use for older people – especially in winter. Future public furniture should preferably be constructed in warmer materials. At least some seating should have backs and arm rests. The pedestrianised zones of Stirling city centre contain some attractive stone-built features that incorporate seating. The comfort of using these, could be enhanced by adding warmer materials to the parts that are touched when using them.



Seating availability when arriving at a destination is vital. In some cases the walk from parking is too far. Consider visibility and signage toward mobility aids.



Consider enhancing the provision, quality, and comfort of seating at major junctions, meeting places, and route decision points.



Make use of natural seating places. Use locations sheltered from the wind, preferably on the sunny side of the street. Replace some seating previously removed.

# Paving and Surfaces

The Citizen Audit Team identified that the priority concern for paving materials is to differentiate areas for pedestrians versus cars and bikes. This is becoming more important with the near silent movement of electric cars and bicycles. The junction at between Port St and King Street, for example, causes confusion as it appears to be a pedestrian space, yet cars come around the bend at some speed.

There is a preference to avoid further use of the varied colours and tones of stone paving used on the pedestrianised section of Port Street – as they can cause perceptual problems and increase risks of falls for people with some types of dementia. It is better when broader areas of paving (with the same function) are as tonally consistent as possible. Tarmac may be suitable for pavements, as long as they can still be visually differentiated from any areas of road carriageway. If using stone or brick pavers, then care might also be needed to minimize undulations and trip hazards (e.g. for people who have a shuffle in their gait).

Raised crossings should follow the material/tone of pedestrian areas (being different from the road) as this will help guide people to cross the road at formal crossing locations. Any dropped kerbs should be gradual, for ease of pushing wheelchairs or trolleys.

Tonal contrast should be used to visual highlight any obstacles, trip hazards, steps or changes in level.



Crossing the road can be challenging, but inconsistent paving can make this more difficult. (Streetview image from citizens virtual audit).



Clear delineation of vehicle vs pedestrian space is important. Shared surfaces can be confusing. (Citizen photo from a café on the scoping walk).

# Paving and Surfaces

## Drainage:

Even shallow puddles of standing water can be problematic for some people – often being perceived as deep holes. Over the course of the program of audits, puddles of this kind were most-commonly encountered at crossing points and gateways.



# Good Approaches: Signage



A good example from Kings Park uses both text **and** icons, good contrast and well-positioned directional arrows.



Simple tonal scheme. Light coloured sign for dark walls and vice-versa. (Image courtesy of DSDC).



Identifying signs that tell a story can enhance wayfinding and increase the value and sense of a place, artefact, or landmark.



Finding the way **OUT** is also important



Recognizable icons and consistent colour can help.



Clear colour-coding of signage can help (even if many people dislike yellow!)



# Good Approaches: Signage



Wheeled chairs make arrival or departure easier for some



Valuable places to sit and rest upon arrival or where waiting occurs.



Regular places to sit allows people to rest when they need it. Small scale furniture arrangements support meaningful social interaction. Seating area design is familiar, comfortable and chairs provide good support. Enhanced light, items of interest, and things to do will help when visiting for a longer time.



Mixed seating in activity spaces allows for different preferences and physical needs. Tables and chairs are light enough to be moved easily for different functions and group sizes.





# Artwork and Furniture as Aids to Wayfinding



A wooden bench by Jason Nelson commissioned for the new Stirling Health and Care Village opening and due to be situated outdoors is an example of a warmer and more accessible bench or seating with a handrail and inviting design.



One of a series of lanterns in the courtyards at the Bellfield Centre, each visually differentiated by colour, pattern etc, helping to identify where you are in different areas of the building.



Use of colour, texture/materials or pattern to reinforce wayfinding, create points of interest. Example wayfinding and contemporary arts curation in the Bellfield by Leigh Bagley.

# Imagining a more dementia-friendly Stirling

Sketches, Ideas  
and Proposals



# Imagining a more dementia-friendly Stirling



Warmer seating, better lighting and adding greenspace elements to the main pedestrianised areas would support wayfinding, create meeting and resting points and improve the environment. It would also support safer pedestrian use of the area as it would help define areas and paths.

Idea Sketch: Warmer seating, better lighting and adding greenspace elements to the main pedestrianised areas would support wayfinding, create meeting and resting points, and improve the environment. It would also support safer pedestrian use of the area as it define areas and paths.

# Imagining a more dementia-friendly Stirling



Existing bin cover at Top of the Town using heritage imagery.

*Robert Burns* by local artist Michael Corr.  
[www.michaelcorrartist.co.uk](http://www.michaelcorrartist.co.uk)

*Zurich Improvisations VII* by Alan Davie (1920-2014) – Care of University of Stirling Art Collection

Combatting street clutter and bins with artist commissioned bin panels that can be permanent or temporary.



before



after

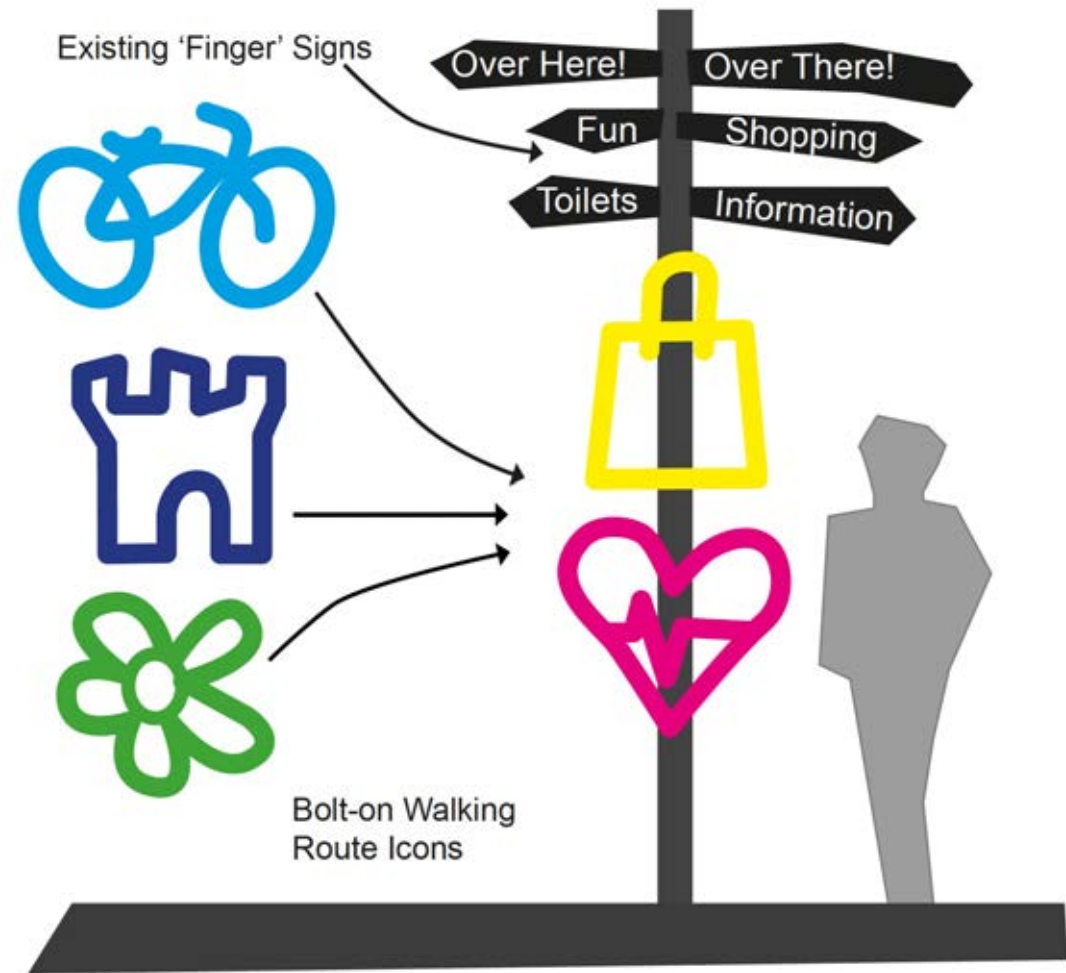


# Imagining a more dementia-friendly Stirling

The citizen audit team identified that the existing black heritage wayfinding signage is not easily spotted as it 'gets lost in a sea of black poles' suggesting it would help if the existing signage was made to be more visually prominent – for example by painting the 'poles' an eye catching colour.

The proposal opposite came about as part of a post-audit café discussions. It proposes a series of distinct 'clamp-on' icons intended to compliment the themed and colour coded walking routes proposed by the citizen group in other discussions.

These 'icons' could be seen and understood from some distance away, support confident wayfinding on each route, and helping to overcome some of the problems seeing and reading the existing signs. Not reliant on text, they are also more accessible to children, tourists, and people with dementia or sight impairments. Each post could support multiple overlapping route icons.



Route Icons – after sketches from a post-audit citizen discussion

# Imagining a more dementia-friendly Stirling



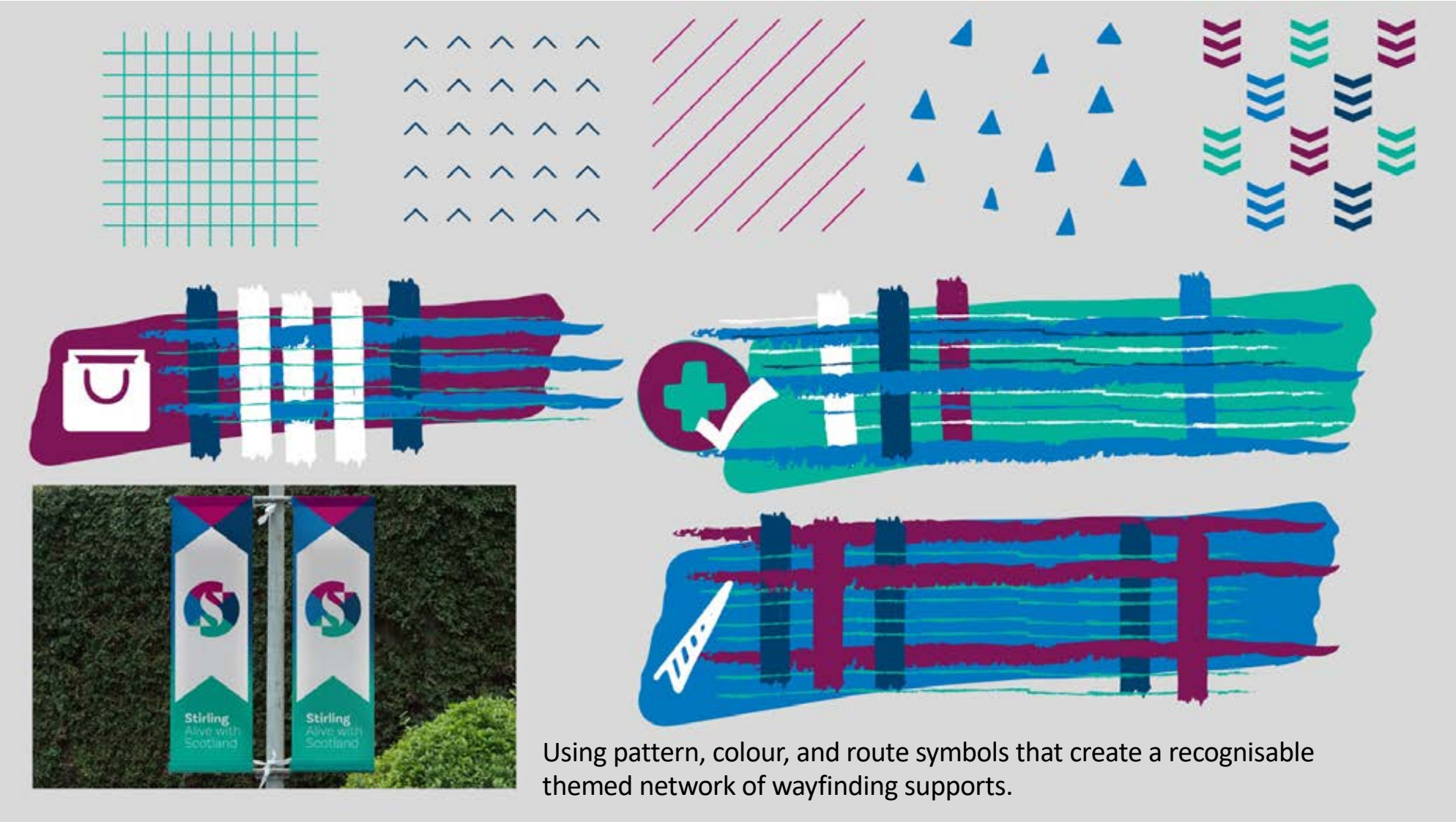
# Imagining a more dementia-friendly Stirling



Creating signage cuffs, banners, and other graphically themed elements as wayfinding prompts on routes around the city for tourists and residents. Highlighting the distance, or walking times, to key destinations would enhance the visitor experience (not illustrated).



# Imagining a more dementia-friendly Stirling



Using pattern, colour, and route symbols that create a recognisable themed network of wayfinding supports.



# Imagining a more dementia-friendly Stirling



**Retail Walking Route**  
Travel hub to Waitrose via Port Street and Upper Craigs



**Back Walk and Park Route**  
including Kings Park and Kings's Knot



**Leisure Route**  
Park and Ride, The Peak, The Vue, The Engine Shed, The Library, The Smith, Kings Park



**Civic Route**  
Travel Hub to Customer First, Wolfcraig, Old Viewforth, Stirling Health and Care Village



**Unicorn Heritage Route**  
King's Street to Castle



Simple Tartan inspired pattern

Using pattern, colour, and route symbols that create a recognisable themed network of wayfinding supports that reinforce the *Alive with Stirling* identity. This framework can then be used to inform public art and secondary signage commissions that reinforce the identity of each route.



# Imagining a more dementia-friendly Stirling



Using arts commission (sculptures) images from local gallery collections and Stirling branding to support wayfinding and placemaking. Creating stopping, meeting, and talking points, possibly with digital information stations.



# Imagining a more dementia-friendly Stirling



Using arts commissions (murals) images from local gallery collections and Stirling branding to support wayfinding and placemaking. Creating stopping, meeting, and talking points. Using the back of digital kiosks and other under-utilized surfaces in new ways.

Illustrated artwork in this montage:

- *Robert Burns* by Michael Corr
- *Sisyphus* by Willie Rodger (1930-2018) – Care of University of Stirling Art Collection
- *Zurich Improvisations VII* by Alan Davie (1920-2014) – Care of University of Stirling Art Collection



# Making Stirling a Dementia Friendly City

Vision for the Future



# Vision for the Future

The work undertaken through this programme is dementia inclusive, citizen focused, and tourism aware. The work identifies positive aspects of current city centre environments, but also raises many of the biggest most common issues impacting people living with dementia - in many cases suggestions of how to address them. Although the recommendations of this report could help to optimise isolated interventions, the recommendations will have significantly greater positive impact if implemented in a wide and consistent manner as part of a city improvement masterplan.

This modest project only covered small proportion of the potential sites, areas and routes that might be included in an overall plan for the city, but focuses on the initial sets of priority topics, streets, and venues identified by citizen participants (as informed by Stirling Council's project brief). Further, sustained council and community engagement of this nature could have significant benefits for the city, its inhabitants and visitors. It could help to advance Stirling Council's commitments to the Dementia Friendly Stirling group objectives as well as other community development objectives, by helping to support agreement upon and delivery of meaningful and impactful enhancements to the city, including through the City Region Deal, local planning and tourism and economic development, as well as in health and social care.

The recommendations of the group fall under 5 main headings, and are expanded in the following pages:

- A. Sustained Citizen Engagement in City and Neighbourhood Design**
- B. Strengthen and Celebrate Stirling's City Identity**
- C. Improve Signage and Wayfinding**
- D. Support and Co-ordinate Improved Civic Inclusion**
- E. Build on this Work: Expand to other Key Spaces and Places**



# Vision for the Future

## 1. Sustained Citizen Engagement in City and Neighbourhood Design

One of the strengths of this project was the engagement with citizens living with dementia and their unpaid carers, supporting them to build capacity and confidence as experts-by-experience. This approach could be nurtured and sustained, not only as an effective form of community engagement, but as a way of incorporating inclusive design principles in ANY Stirling Council led capital development or improvement, including inclusive processes and outcomes from the City Deal. The activities and tools developed during the project were co-designed with people living with dementia and their carers to ensure they are accessible, meaningful, adaptable to individual abilities and preferences, and to different settings; whether lunch clubs, walking groups, or online discussions (e.g. *Google Streetmap*). A recommended improvement to this is to include resident groups, access panels, council planners, venues staff, or other decision makers (as appropriate) as part of activities and discussions on a given project.

We are now adapting these for use with individuals shielding from Covid-19 and plan to test the tools further within neighbourhood cluster groups as part of the ongoing *Our Connected Neighbourhoods* project .

### Recommended Actions:

- A. Commit to maintaining involvement of a Citizen Audit Group. Use this model to build capacity for similar identified villages, neighbourhoods and towns to roll out across Stirling over the next five years.
- B. Prioritise citizen led planning approaches in all future new development, City Deal projects, refurbishment projects, and agree to regular reviews of audited priority buildings.
- C. Involve access panels, resident groups, businesses as appropriate and approve model and tools for use in future built environment projects
- D. Put in place a range of changes in response to the building and route audits and review six monthly with the audit group to identify progress .



# Vision for the Future!

## 2. Strengthen and Celebrate Stirling's City Identity

Several audit discussions led to conclusion that thematic route-mapping of Stirling, could at once address the wayfinding issues raised, but could also be used as a way reinforce the city identity. The city can currently feel segmented into an upper heritage area for tourists and a lower retail area for residents and business. A network of themed routes could be used to highlight the wealth of walk-able routes, activities and opportunities within close reach of Stirling town centre. Suggested themes include Arts, Food, Citizenship, Exploring, History, Sport, Leisure, Shopping, Tourism & Heritage, and Wellbeing.

The *Alive with Stirling* branding is now well established in social media and across literature, so extension of this branding could work well. The alignment to the branding would work for inclusion, tourism, and local civic pride, using route-mapping to encourage people to explore the city via different routes with different flavours or interests.

The themed approach could allow different stakeholders to align and work together for mutual benefit, whether different Council departments, to sports and tourism destinations, to retailers, and transport providers.

### Recommended Actions:

- A. Mapping and agreeing thematic routes as suggested.
- B. Work with and align city branding to street signage, and mapping in the city.



# Vision for the Future!

## 3. Improve Signage and Wayfinding

A central topic of the environmental audits in project concerned the dual issues of access to key information, and the decision-making processes, required to undertake various journeys around the city. The conclusion, with some notable exceptions, was that the availability, readability, and reliability of wayfinding infrastructure across the city centre was less than helpful to the needs of either visitors to the city, and people living with dementia.

Key criticisms of existing wayfinding infrastructure related to issues of location and consistency. Improvements to city wayfinding must therefore address both issues, through strategy and design framework, to ensure clear, consistent, and reliable information is provided at right locations. It would be essential to upgrade wayfinding at the travel hubs, and at main street intersections across the city centre. A themed set of routes - identifiable graphically, with public art, and signing of heritage features would encourage exploration of the city by all whilst supporting wayfinding confidence who need it most.

Repairing and rebranding traditional routes including the connections between the Back Walk and other paths across the top of the town could revive these as walkable routes, providing interest for tourists, and reduce car use by connecting areas that currently feel too disparate for walking and cycling between them.

### Recommended Actions:

- A. Develop a wayfinding masterplan including, routes, and signage design, to ensure that any new, refurbished, and future wayfinding measures are clear, and consistent approach and identity.
- B. Review, renew, renovate (and in some cases remove) existing wayfinding infrastructure. Review and improve surfaces, seating, lighting and other wayfinding supports.
- C. Secure resources and local business involvement to redevelop Back Walk, Vennels and improve pedestrian experience of Kings, Spittal, and Bakers Streets (and others).
- D. Utilise creative community to support commissioned wayfinding through signage, public art and street furniture, and bin screens.



# Vision for the Future!

## 4. Support and Co-ordinate Improved Civic Inclusion

People with dementia and their carers regularly experience civic exclusion – though not usually any mal-intention of others. Most individuals, businesses, and others are happy to take steps to accommodate and include people living with dementia – though only once they understand why and how. In many cases only small, achievable, changes may be needed to bring about significant improvements. We believe that a combination of awareness raising, information sharing, and local leadership can help the whole community to transition from unintended exclusion by default to active informed inclusion.

By funding this project, Stirling Council has taken a clear public step forward in the ambition for Stirling to be a dementia-friendly city. The Council is well placed to use this momentum to bring about broader change through leading by example, influencing others, and supporting the wider the community, through dementia inclusive policies, processes, spaces, and services.

Countless national dementia friendly and inclusive initiatives exist, but a small number of initiatives implemented in a concentrated and consistent manner is likely to have the most positive effect. The Council, business and public organisations could come together to review, agree, then promote and adapt a small selection of accessible initiatives – potentially incorporating staff training and access to toilets

### A. Recommended Actions:

- B. Work with partners at Dementia Friendly Stirling and Stirling BID Go Forth to agree guidance and provide information to businesses on measures they could consider to become more dementia friendly.
- C. Encourage more businesses to train staff, open toilets, and publicly promote their efforts, and successes in becoming more dementia accessible as part of coordinated movement across the city
- D. Request that future development proposals for the city implement dementia design principles, and that major proposals are reviewed a citizen panel including people living with dementia.

# Vision for the Future!

## 5. Build on this Work: Expand to other Key Spaces and Places

This project was concentrated on improving the accessibility of various Council buildings and public streetscapes in Stirling City Centre. However this project also highlighted the need to encourage and support other public (non-Council) venues in Stirling, including shopping and leisure facilities, parks and historic sites, galleries and museums, café's and corner shops, to become more accessible to people living with dementia. A sustained program of group audits for all types of spaces across the city could help council departments, business owners, and venue managers to identify further ways improving both physical and cognitive accessibility of the spaces under their control. Support provided through Stirling Council and other organisations in the Dementia Friendly Stirling group, could encourage wider development of Stirling city as a dementia friendly environment and community.

### Recommended Actions:

- A. Continue to work with the Citizen Audit Group and develop proposals to work with other city partners to build dementia friendly environment and route auditing into future.
- B. Explore using this model of citizen engagement in other towns, villages and neighbourhoods.
- C. Link developments to Place Partnership programmes including Go Forth, Stirling Business Networks, Forth Environment Link and the City Deal.
- D. Build a profile for this model of community involvement and disseminate through COSLA and other agencies.



# About this Report

## Funding

This project was funded by Stirling Council with support and in-kind contributions from the University of Stirling, DSDC, Artlink Central and Alzheimer Scotland.

## Citizen Volunteers

The environmental audit activities reported in this document were directed and undertaken, on a voluntary basis, by a panel of local citizens of comprised old older people including Stirling residents living with dementia and their carers.

## Accessible Formatting

This report has aimed to adapt age and dementia-friendly formatting, including large font, plain English, and where possible, higher contrast illustrations

## Google Images and Maps

As free-to-use Google products, including *MyMaps* and *Streetview*, were used by the citizen group to inform their audit work, screenshots from some of these are used to illustrate some relevant sections of the report.

## OpenStreetMap

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## Open Access

The tools and methods developed during the project will be made available by Open Access to other groups through the OCN website.

[www.OurConnectedNeighbourhoods.org.uk](http://www.OurConnectedNeighbourhoods.org.uk)

We anticipate that some sections of the report will also be made publicly available by consent of Stirling Council.

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