

Equal Access Advisory Group - Theme of meeting, Town Centre

Meeting Notes – 9 August 2024 – Congleton Town Hall

Attendance: - Deborah Lawson (Chair), Cllr Kay Wesley, Tom Stephens, Denis Murphy, Theresa, Alec Scaresbrook, Jackie MacArthur, Diane Ritherdon (online)

Apologies – None

1. Notes of the meeting of **31 May** accepted as correct.
2. Theme of this meeting was **Town Centre** Discussions were held around pavements and paths, access to shops, toilets, benches and places to rest and A boards.

a) Pavements and Paths

- i) Problem with uneven and narrow pavements not even dropped kerbs
- ii) Steps in town with no alternative route marked out – need to add signs eg how to get to the Market.
- iii) Disability guide needs to show safe routes – including dropped kerbs and cut-through routes that may not be obvious to people. (ramp to Morrisons a bit too tight with the bend)
- iv) Need to think about routes to key locations – such as doctors' surgeries, library, park, bus station, job centre - places where people may want to go
- v) Campaign to clear the clutter – household bins, out-of-place A Boards,

Action: - Kay and Theresa to check out routes from Able World to Readsmore Surgery

Action: - People to report broken pavements etc via FIX MY STREET

Action: - Jackie to provide maps to Denis to note dropped kerb places.

b) Access to Shops

- i) Create a guide to show which shops are wheelchair accessible - create a Welcome/Friendly sticker.
- ii) Can learn from the work that Diane did with the dementia friendly Congleton stickers
- iii) Create a list of things to check (wide doors, electronic doors, flat, ramp, bell, able to turn around in the shop and fit down the aisles
- iv) Note about other issues – is the signage legible? Staff disability aware?
- v) Does the shop offer a quieter time, dogs, dimmer lights – aware of not over stimulating.

c) Toilets

- i) Major consideration for people coming into town – many people with a disability will only go to towns where they know there are decent accessible toilets. – CTC aware that Congleton is work in progress and is working on several options.
- ii) Need to note how accessible toilets in pubs, cafes etc are for the disability guide.

d) Benches and Places to Rest

- i) Need more places to rest – audit of benches. Note if a 3-4 seater bench, or 2-3 bench.

- ii) Check the memorial bench website and encourage others to add any missed benches, <https://openbenches.org/#53.16171/-2.211541/17>

e) A Boards

- 3. Publicity**
- 4. Active Travel**
- 5. AOB – Events**
- 6. Accessible Guide**
- 7. Date of Next Meeting**

Date of Next Meeting – suggested late July – Jackie to organise and let people have the date.