

ACTION PLAN

Alongside using the Guide to Getting Better Streets and Pavements, you can start to build your own action plan by answering the questions below. These questions will help you clearly explain the problems, and find out who you need to contact and who can support you.



Action

Plan

WHAT ARE THE PROBLEMS?



Clearly explain what the problem is. Be specific. Make a note of the exact location where the problems are. Photos can be useful.

Sutherland Street example:

The pavement along Sutherland Street has cracked paving slabs. Previous repairs have been poorly carried out. There are raised drainage covers and loose chippings at the crossing to the community centre.

All of these are trip hazards and together they make navigating the pavement extremely difficult.

WHY IS THIS A PRIORITY?



It may be obvious to you that this issue is causing a problem, but it is important to remember that the council usually has a very large area to maintain and may not understand the impact it is having.

If you can “make it personal” and describe exactly why it is a problem, this can help those with power to decide to ensure your area becomes a priority.

Sutherland Street example:

The retired housing development tenants, with an age range of 65yrs old to 98yrs old, are a priority group. There are 46 tenants directly affected, some to the point that they are not able to walk the short distance from their home to the community centre. This has caused loss of independence. In the last six months there have been 14 falls, with one resulting in a nine-day hospital admission.

WHO ELSE IS AFFECTED?



Numbers can be a powerful argument – if you are in supported accommodation, how many flats / units are there? How many people? Are there others in your neighbourhood facing the same issues?

Sutherland Street example:

Friends and family wishing to visit.



Action

Plan

WHAT SOLUTION DO YOU WANT?

It is more effective to describe how you want to use the street, rather than a specific change. Sometimes there are other solutions to a problem that you may not have thought of!



Sutherland Street example:

A review of the pavement and a solution that allows older people with mobility aids and in wheelchairs to get from their house to the community centre safely.

WHO OWNS THE LAND? WHO CAN MAKE THE DECISION TO MAKE IMPROVEMENTS?

If you live in a housing association house, they may be responsible for some repairs. It is worth checking with your housing officer, development co-ordinator or other contact.

Problems are often the responsibility of the local council, but sometimes are on private land. The council can usually help you find out who the land belongs to, or you can check through the Land Registry. If the problem you face is on privately owned land, it is worth discussing this with your local councillor.



Sutherland Street example:

City of Edinburgh Council



Action

Plan

HAVE YOU REPORTED THE PROBLEM?

It is important to report the problem through official channels. In the Guide to Getting Better Streets and Pavements, you will find a page for writing down what has been reported, who reported it and any outcomes – this can be very useful for keeping track of what is happening, whether you are doing this as a group or an individual.

It is never too late to start reporting the issues – building the evidence helps make the case.



Sutherland Street example:

Letters and emails to and from the council from 2015. Some previous repairs were made, but were low quality.

HOW WILL WE GATHER EVIDENCE?

Write down:

- what you have reported
- who you reported it to
- when you reported it and
- when they said they would get back to you.

Especially if there are a group of you, make a habit of keeping notes on your reports. This can also help your local councillor when they are speaking to council officers.



Sutherland Street example:

We reported the cracked pavements to the council in November 2015, and some small repairs were made. These did not fix the main problem of the poor quality pavements.



Action

Plan

WHO DO WE NEED TO SPEAK TO? WHO CAN HELP US?



Sometimes it is difficult to find the right person to help with your problem, and sometimes it takes more than one person or department.

It is usually a good idea to speak to your local councillor – they understand how the council works, and can put you in touch with the right department (or departments). You can invite your councillor to visit you to see the problem, and ask them to help you report the problem.

If there you have an active community council in your area, they may also be able to support you and inform you about any other reports that have been made.

Sometimes this is a question of “trial and error” – the first person you speak to may not be the right one. All our groups told us, “you have to be willing to persevere”.

Sutherland Street example:

Not yet identified the best person to speak to.

We have invited a local councillor to meet with us and join us for a cup tea to discuss what we can do, and who the key decision makers are.

HOW WILL OTHERS AFFECTED BY THE ISSUES KNOW WHAT IS HAPPENING?



If you can, arrange to use existing social occasions to keep everyone informed, or arrange a coffee morning to invite other neighbours to come along for an update. This can help you to feel supported and to keep going if not much seems to be happening.

Sutherland Street example:

The Tenants Organisation Committee will co-ordinate our activity and will keep everyone informed.



Action**Plan****Template**

QUESTIONS	YOUR ANSWERS
What are the problems?	
Why is this a priority?	
Who else is affected?	
What solution do you want?	
Who owns the land? Who can make the decision to make improvements?	

Action**Plan****Template**

QUESTIONS	YOUR ANSWERS
Have you reported the problem?	
How will we gather evidence?	
Who do we need to speak to?	
How will others affected by the issues know what is happening?	