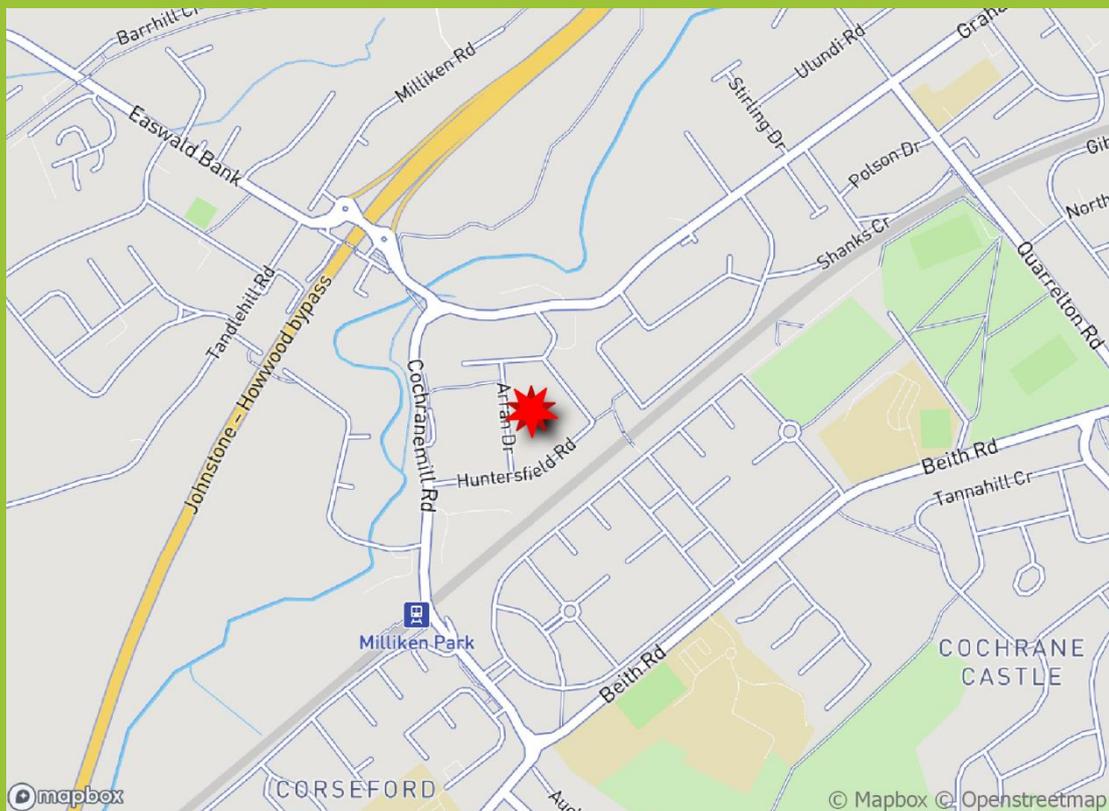


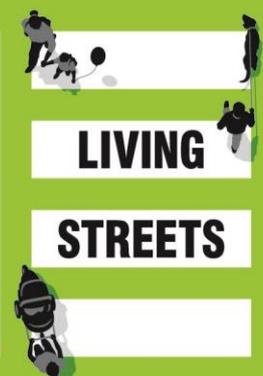
Pedestrian conditions assessment

Sandy Flats (Linstone Housing)

Social Housing Partnership Fund for
Improved Cycling & Walking Facilities 2020-21



We are Living Streets Scotland, part of the UK charity for everyday walking. We want to create a nation where walking is the natural choice for everyday, local journeys.



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Summary

Key points for Registered Social Landlord

Our assessment of the Sandy Flats area, which should be checked with residents and other stakeholders, leads us to conclude that pedestrians are disadvantaged by these key issues:

- Most routes into or out of Sandy Flats are defined by a need to walk along the side of roads designed primarily to promote vehicle flow and speed, and on which pedestrians may feel isolated due to the lack of occupied neighbouring buildings. This issue will be much worse after dark.
- Routes which avoid these roads use either of two paths, neither of which is overlooked, both of which may be unwelcoming, particularly after dark.
- Key facilities are a considerable distance from Sandy Flats. The nearest relatively large supermarket is around 1.7km away, being located for ease of access by car.

As the Registered Social Landlord, it may only be possible for Linstone Housing Association to lead action in connection with a small number of the issues and ideas described in this report. The most significant of these might be around:

- improving the control of parking within Sandy Flats, and
- promoting the idea that junctions within Sandy Flats could be improved to support pedestrians and slow vehicles.

We report on wider issues because we consider that the better these are understood the greater the likelihood of change – whether locally and more generally.

Background note:

Our urban environments are defined by interrelated features under the influence of many different bodies, and this report is about current conditions whatever their cause. Registered Social Landlords do not generally have control over the main factors which affect pedestrians in the wider areas around the properties they manage. Likewise local authorities - with limited resources and budgets, and facing numerous other constraints - do not have immediate control over many of the factors which affect pedestrians.

However, in the longer term it is helpful if problems are understood, and potential solutions are explored. Registered Social Landlords may be able to have a positive influence, making more immediate changes where they have the power to do so, supporting others to understand the issues their residents face, and playing their part in working toward change.

This report is based on an assessment which used mapping and information available from sources such as Google Streetview. As part of checking accuracy we have discussed our findings with staff in Linstone Housing Association with local knowledge. The intention is that the information in the report is used to support a longer informed discussion with local residents, as they are the real experts on the quality of the experience for pedestrians in the areas where they live.

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Introduction

Living Streets has received funding from the Social Housing Partnership Fund for Improved Cycling & Walking Facilities, administered by Cycling Scotland. As part of this work we are assessing conditions for pedestrians around properties managed by Registered Social Landlords.

This report presents observations and suggestions for improving conditions, following an assessment of the area around the Linstone Housing Association property at Sandy Flats, Johnstone.

Key factors we assess

Our assessment looked at issues such as the following:

- **Footway (i.e. pavement)¹ and path provision:** the presence, surface quality, continuity, width, obstruction, and design of footways and paths.
- **Accessibility:** how far footways and paths, and their interaction with the carriageways of streets, have been designed to accommodate disabled people and others less able to deal with complicated or dangerous conditions.
- **General area design and character:** whether this is an area full of human activity and street life or one dominated by the movement of or parking of vehicles and the provision of roads designed primarily to facilitate these things.
- **Local area traffic-related safety:** looking at possibility of risk of injury from vehicles, and evaluating the likely effects of this risk on behaviour, not least in terms of how easily pedestrians cross streets or junctions, but also on how pleasant or otherwise a journey might be.
- **Whether streets and paths are welcoming to pedestrians:** both in and around an area, including focusing on how they will feel after dark or later at night – considering in particular what ‘passive surveillance’² exists, and to what level streets and paths are overlooked from buildings nearby.
- **Area permeability:** looking at whether paths and footways connect to provide convenient shorter routes for pedestrians, and longer routes for those driving – or whether routes for pedestrians are defined by following streets which have been designed around vehicle use, or by the necessity to negotiate these safely.
- **Entry and exit points and routes from an area:** looking at what boundaries around the area define these points/routes, and conditions for pedestrians here.
- **Likely destinations outside the local area and routes to/from these:** considering pedestrian journeys primarily for utility journeys – including for shopping, education, and work – and conditions for pedestrians along these, distances, and potential use of public transport.

¹ For clarity this report uses the word term ‘footway’ rather than the phrase ‘the pavement’ to describe the space for walking on beside a road. We do this because the word ‘pavement’ is also used in technical discussion to describe the actual material a road or path is constructed from.

² We use the term ‘passive surveillance’ to describe the way in which it feels safer to be on a street where there are other people nearby who may be able to see activity, including those who might look out from the windows of a building – even if nobody is currently actively doing so.

Location

Sandy Flats is at the west edge of Johnstone.



Location

The boundaries to Sandy Flats seem primarily to be defined by:

- Cochranemill Road and Kilbarchan Road – which are designed for vehicle speed and flow and in most places at some distance from buildings. There are also areas of woodland and some industrial use alongside these roads.
- A railway line (crossed locally by only one local road bridge, and one local footbridge).
- The border with the neighbouring housing estate, which is not directly connected by streets and which can be accessed directly only on two narrow paths.

At the north of Bute Road the housing estates are also separated by an area of undeveloped land.



Observations

Key observations

We think that these issues (and any positive points) most strongly influence the experience of pedestrians in the area. These issues may arise from many different factors. The Registered Social Landlord, and even the local authority, may have little or no direct control over some of them.

For pedestrians conditions within the Sandy Flats estate contrast strongly with conditions outside it and on its borders.

Buildings in Sandy Flats are generally inward looking, effectively turning their backs to Cochranemill Road and Kilbarchan Road.

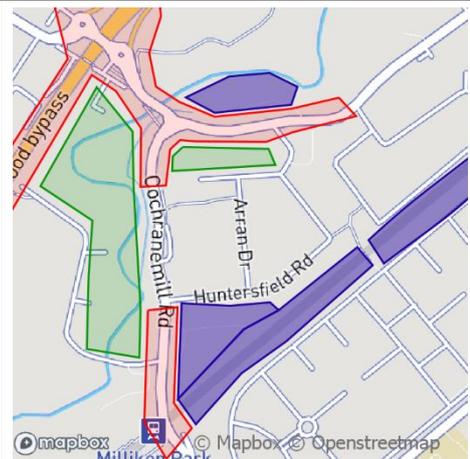
These roads, the railway to the southeast, woodland and industrial areas, create fairly clear boundaries to the residential area for pedestrians.

The exception is to the northeast, where the boundary between the Sandy Flats estate and the neighbouring Ryefield Road, is less distinct.

Crossing points for these roads and areas, and the railway line, together define the character of most of the entry/exit routes to/from the area. For pedestrians these are generally alongside vehicle orientated roads which lack any passive surveillance from nearby buildings and where they are a long way from other human activity (other than that of those driving past). This helps to create the sense that Sandy Flats is something of an island which internally is more friendly to pedestrians, surrounded by much less welcoming space.

These issues will be reduced when paths and carriageways are busier, and in daylight, and will be at their worst after dark and later at night. Unfortunately if carriageways are busier the footways may become less welcoming for reasons of safety from vehicles, noise from vehicles, and in wet weather spray or splashed water from vehicles.

Footways on sections of both Cochranemill Road and Kilbarchan Road are very narrow, given that nothing separates faster moving traffic from the edge of the footway.



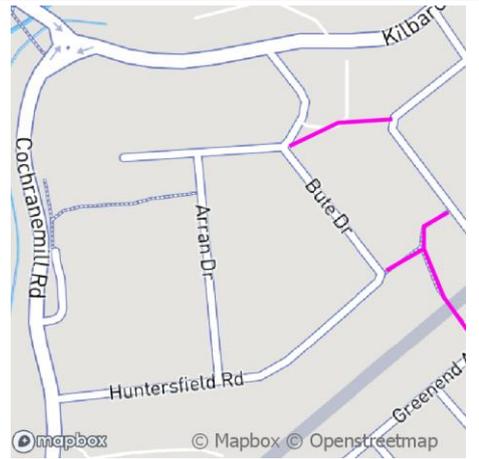
Red = vehicle orientated (few buildings)
Blue = industrial / railway
Green = woodland

[Links to representative images on Google Streetview:](#)

[Kilbarchan Road west of Beech Road](#)

[Cochranemill Rd, southwest of Sandy Flats](#)

There are pedestrian paths out of the area, avoiding the Cochranemill Road / Kilbarchan Road – linking to Ryefield Road or across a footbridge to the southeast of the railway.



Pedestrian paths over the railway and to Ryefield Road (marked in purple)

Unfortunately these two key pedestrian paths out of the area, over the railway or onto Ryefield Road, are not well overlooked. The path toward the north of Bute Drive is alongside undeveloped ground, and users are somewhat hidden from view.

The paths closer to the railway are between the rear gardens of houses, and users are generally hidden from view by trees and high fences.

[Links to representative images on Google Streetview:](#)

[Path toward railway footbridge](#)

[Railway footbridge](#)

[Path at north end of Bute Drive](#)

Key facilities are some considerable distance from the area.

The closest large shop for food is the Morrisons supermarket, which is around 1.7km away, close to Johnstone town centre. The site for this supermarket seems to have been chosen primarily for ease of access by vehicle from the nearby major junction on the A737 dual carriageway.



While initial stages of a walking route toward the centre of Johnstone are less welcoming, fortunately conditions on the footway of Kilbarchan Road to the northeast of Beech Road improve considerably. Issues remain, but for most of its length Kilbarchan Road here is lined with buildings which face onto it.

[Links to representative images on Google Streetview:](#)

[Kilbarchan Rd east of Beech Rd](#)

The current situation regarding parking of vehicles in the estate to an extent creates a sense of disorder and neglect. Fortunately it appears that pressure on space for parking in most areas is relatively low.

[Links to representative images on Google Streetview:](#)

[Arran Drive](#)

[Huntersfield Road](#)

Secondary observations

<p>While a through route for traffic exists through Sandy Flats we guess that most people driving will prefer to stay on Cochranemill Road and Kilbarchan Road, as these are designed for speed and flow.</p> <p>It is possible that if congestion arises on these roads more people would choose to drive through the area.</p> <p>If this becomes an issue (or is a current issue) it may be helpful to prevent through traffic.</p>	 <p>Possible traffic through route</p>
<p>The presence of a small 'Usave' store on Bute Drive is probably important to residents who don't have access to a car, given the distance to larger facilities.</p>	
<p>Streets within Sandy Flats are generally overlooked from houses. These are relatively wide for their level of use. There are obstructions, but these are relatively rare. Parking on the footway is an issue in a few locations, but generally access is not blocked.</p>	
<p>Streets lack dropped kerbs, but many have large sections of kerb with a lower upstand, and there are multiple access points to the carriageway. There appears to be no tactile paving to support people with sight loss.</p>	
<p>Although it appears that there is sufficient space provided relative to the demand for parking this appears to be poorly controlled in places, with the result that vehicles feel to be littered rather randomly around streets and on sections of footway. This has a distinct and powerful effect on the character of the streets at these locations.</p>	<p>Links to representative images on Google Streetview:</p> <p><u>Arran Drive (vehicles parked in varying locations, on footway, in centre of sections of carriageway, double parked).</u></p>
<p>Junctions within the residential area look as if they may carry relatively low volumes of traffic, and could therefore easily be narrowed so that pedestrians have a minimal width of carriageway to cross. Examples of how differently a junction can be designed are provided below.</p>	
<p>There is a station nearby (less than 500m for some residents). Access to this is along Cochranemill Road. There are bus stops on both Cochranemill Road and Kilbarchan Road. Use of both the station and the bus stops means crossing these roads. There are no formalised controlled crossing points. Given the design of these roads (which is to facilitate traffic flow and speed) this omission may bar access to many people (for example</p>	

<p>those with disabilities or children), or very much increase the risks involved.</p>	
<p>Trains and buses link to Johnstone centre, Paisley, Glasgow, Kilbarchan, and the Ayrshire coast (including Kilwinning, Ayr and Ardrossan).</p> <p>Train services provide access toward Glasgow (20 minute journey) via Johnstone and Paisley, around every 30 minutes at many times.</p> <p>Fairly regular bus services (around every 15 minutes at times) provide access to Johnstone Hight Street and the supermarkets there (around 7 minutes).</p>	
<p>Access to Cochrane Castle Primary School and St David's, along with Johnstone High School, are likely to be via the footbridge at the east end of Huntersfield Road. A crossing with traffic signals (i.e. traffic lights) supports access over Beith Road to the high school. Some parts of this route are not overlooked, and are bounded by undeveloped land and buildings in poor repair, and these may be very unwelcoming after dark.</p>	<p>Links to representative images on Google Streetview:</p> <p><u>Highcraig Avenue</u></p> <p><u>Railway footbridge</u></p>

Potential improvements

This section lists some ideas for change. These are intended to prompt discussion, and are not necessarily recommendations. We've separated the ideas into three rough categories. The first ideas are about changes which might more easily be led by the Registered Social Landlord. The Registered Social Landlord may be able to have a strong influence in connection with the second group of ideas. The third group of ideas are generally for the longer term, or of a nature which means that a much wider group of agencies would need to be involved.

Led by the Registered Social Landlord:

The Registered Social Landlord might consider trying to take a lead on the following issues, although the cooperation of other bodies might be required:

Control of parking

The parking of vehicles within Sandy Flats should be more tightly controlled, emphasising the presence of pedestrian space supporting pedestrian passage. It may be possible for Linstone Housing to lead on seeking (and funding) a feasibility study around this issue, and on smaller changes. The full support from the local authority may be needed if more substantial change is sought.

Some degree of change might be achieved simply by seeking community agreement, or by marking areas for parking with paint. Vehicles are sometimes parked on footways because their drivers feel they are being considerate in leaving a carriageway clearer.

Interventions to control parking should recognise that pedestrian routes in the estate should be direct, wide, and unobstructed by vehicles but also important is that parking should feel to be controlled and ordered.

Currently the carriageway space on some of the streets seems sufficient to encourage undesirably fast driving. Changes to better define space for parking could also narrow these carriageways. Some illustrations of different street layouts at a junction, which also define space for parking and narrow the feel of a carriageway, are provided at the end of this document.

Junction redesign

Junctions within Sandy Flats, and could be improved to control vehicle speed, and to prioritise pedestrian movement within the area.

Such changes should take place in parallel with efforts to control parking, and could support these. It may be possible for Linstone Housing to lead on seeking (and funding) a feasibility study around this issue. The full support from the local authority may be needed if more substantial change is sought, however as a key stakeholder Linstone Housing may be in a good position to lead efforts to prompt such change.

In order to illustrate some broad options for improvement some illustrations of different junction layouts are provided at the end of this document.

Influenced by the Registered Social Landlord

These more complex changes might require a much deeper involvement from other bodies, but we guess that the Registered Social Landlord ought to be able to provide strong encouragement or strong influence:

Crossing provision on key roads

It seems likely that it is essential for there to be crossing signals on Cochranemill Road and Kilbarchan Road - if a wide range of pedestrians are to be enabled to safely and easily access both bus and train services. While we have not carried out any formal assessment of traffic conditions here it seems very unlikely that all pedestrians find it easy to cross the carriageways of these roads.

Access to bus and train services seems to be essential for anyone living in Sandy Flats who does not have easy access to a car – and issues with bus and train access may help to encourage car use.

Longer term or more complex change

The potential improvements listed here are of a nature meaning that change is likely to take much longer, and that the Registered Social Landlord is likely to have much less influence:

Future development in the wider area

Currently almost all routes for pedestrians, from Sandy Flats to predictable destinations, lead to people walking beside roads which have been designed to prioritise vehicle speed and flow. Alternatives are convoluted, unobvious, and indirect.

Any new housing in the area around Sandy Flats should be designed with a recognition of the need for direct pedestrian routes toward key destinations, not only for new residents in these areas but also for those in outlying areas of Johnstone like Sandy Flats.

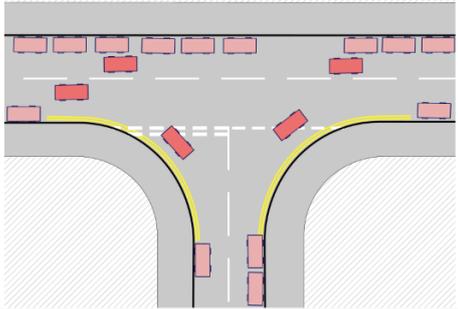
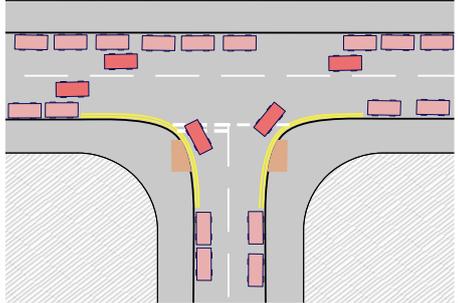
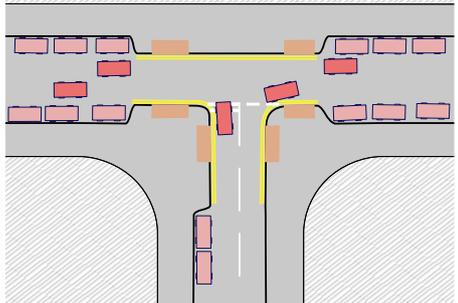
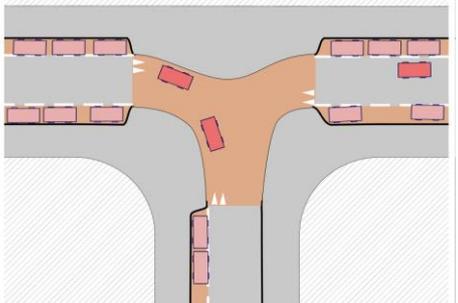
Such routes should be closely overlooked. For example it may be important that buildings are near to such a route, and that have relatively large windows facing the streets/paths.

In the areas closest to Sandy Flats such longer term improvements might most obviously affect routes to Milliken Park station, beside the pedestrian path to Ryefield Avenue (or an equivalent route northeast), and on routes between the railway footbridge and Beith Road.

Further information

Illustrative sketches

Below are greatly simplified sketches highlighting how current junction designs within Sandy Flats compare with junctions which have narrowed carriageway to support pedestrians to cross, or with the removal of priority of one road over another in order to calm traffic speeds. Clearly improving junctions is costly, and we're providing these images initially to explain our assessment that current junction design is an issue.

Approximation of current junction layout	
A junction with shorter crossing distances for pedestrians, and with tighter corners meaning that vehicles can't be driven so quickly around them.	
A junction with much shorter crossing distances for pedestrians, not only across the side road, but also the road currently marked as taking priority.	
A junction showing the removal of priority for one road over another within a residential area. Such a treatment can slow vehicles considerably. The addition of a raised table in the carriageway can help to assist pedestrians with disabilities to cross, and can slow vehicles.	

Potential funding

Funding for improvements to the urban environment might be available from a number of sources, including:

- Places for Everyone:
<https://www.sustrans.org.uk/our-blog/projects/2019/scotland/places-for-everyone/>
- Awards for All:
<https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/under10k>
- The Social Housing Partnership Fund for Improved Cycling & Walking Facilities:
<https://www.cycling.scot/what-we-do/cycling-friendly/social-housing-fund>