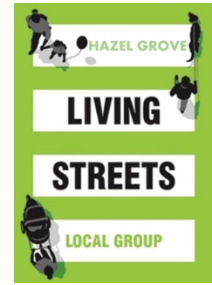


# Hazel Grove Living Streets Local Group

## Street Review Report March 2025



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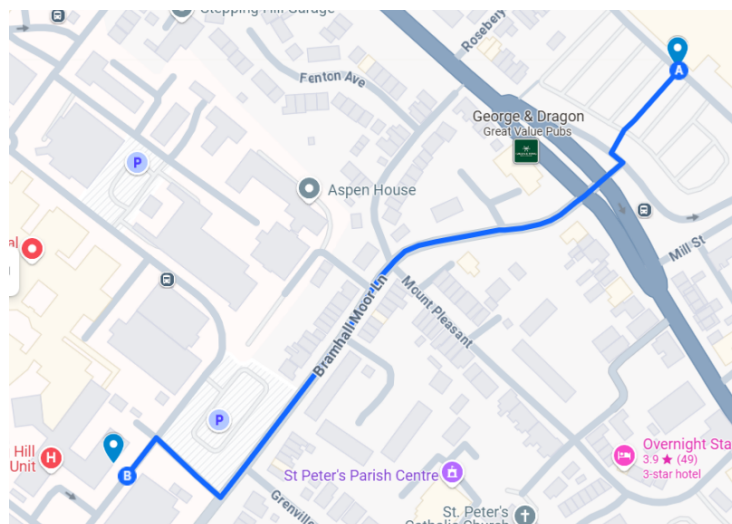
Our local campaign supports the aims of Living Streets, the UK charity for everyday walking. Living Streets want to create a walking nation where people of all generations enjoy the benefits that this simple act brings, on streets fit for walking.

We aim to achieve a safer, more accessible and pleasant environment for walking and wheeling in Hazel Grove and to encourage walking as the natural choice for everyday, local journeys.

### The Street Review

To help make our streets fit for walking and wheeling we are undertaking a series of Street Reviews in Hazel Grove, the purpose being to evaluate the quality of local streets and, where needed, help build a case for improvement. Following Living Streets guidance we carried out a review of a stretch of approximately 500 metres of busy highway from Sainsbury's Supermarket, London Road, via bus stops to Stepping Hill Hospital Maternity Unit.

### The Route



The route was chosen because it is an important pedestrian route between a major supermarket, bus stops, and a busy regional hospital. It is also used by pedestrians travelling to Mastercall out of hours doctors service and schoolchildren from Hazel Grove High School.

## **Encouraging Involvement**

The reviews were carried out on both a weekday and weekend to ensure a range of people could attend and also to assess the route at varying times. We promoted the events with the aim of achieving an inclusive and representative review. We invited members of our local group, the Community Rail Partnership, local ward councillors and council officers from the Strategy, Policy & Research Team and Thriving Places Network & Infrastructure Team. Invitations were issued directly and we also used social media to encourage involvement. Participants included one wheelchair user.

## **Conducting the Review**

Using Living Streets guidance, we shared a checklist of eight categories to discuss with participants whilst walking the route:

- Footway surface and obstructions
- Facilities and signage
- Maintenance and enforcement
- Personal security
- Crossing points and desire lines
- Road layout and space allocation
- Aesthetics
- Traffic

The reviews were carried out on Tuesday 25 March 2025 at 3.00pm and Saturday 29 March 2025 at 11.00am. On both days the weather was clear and dry.

## **Participants**

### **Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council**

Cllr Jake Austin, Hazel Grove ward

Cllr Grace Baynham, Norbury and Woodsmoor ward

Cllr Helen Hibbert, Offerton ward

Russell Scott, Transportation Officer, Sustainable Transport & Highways

### **Community Rail Partnership**

John Kenny, Community Rail Officer

### **Hazel Grove Living Streets**

Carol Rawsthorne

Mark Rawsthorne

## Results of the Review

The following observations were made by various participants during the two reviews. These are documented in the order that the route was taken, starting at the pedestrian exit to Sainsbury's car park, adjacent to the bus stops on London Road. Recommendations for improvements that we believe would encourage more people to walk in this area are shown in *italics*.

### **Pedestrian Exit from Sainsbury's, London Rd, adjacent to bus stops**

It was noted that there is a lack of signage to local amenities at this busy junction.

#### ***Recommendation***

*Signage to guide pedestrians to local amenities including Stepping Hill Hospital, the railway station, library, civic hall, high street shops etc would be useful.*

### **Multi-controlled crossing point on London Road A6**

In order to cross the extremely busy A6, pedestrians are faced with five separately controlled sets of traffic lights, that are not synchronised for pedestrians. In addition, the request buttons on the crossings appear to have no effect.

The participants were very concerned about the narrow, restricted refuge areas between the individually controlled crossings, resulting in pedestrians being surrounded by fast moving traffic whilst waiting for permission to cross. It was described as intimidating.



The wheelchair user who participated in the review commented that the barriers at some crossing points impede the sight lines of wheelchair users.

Pedestrians are regularly seen attempting to cross London Road directly from the bus stop to the south side of New Moor Lane, avoiding the six separately controlled crossing points.

#### ***Recommendation***

*Whilst it is recognised that this is a busy through route for vehicular traffic, we recommend that further consideration is given to increasing the priority of pedestrians at these crossing points.*

*We request a highway engineer look into the arrangement of pedestrian refuge areas, taking account of safety and site lines.*

*A further crossing point closer to the bus stop would aid pedestrian access directly to the south side of New Moor Lane, avoiding six separately controlled crossing points.*

### **New Moor Lane & Bramhall Moor Lane Footway (north side)**

Uneven, patched surfaces with protruding man-hole covers were observed. These were considered to be trip hazards and caused additional difficulties for wheelchair users.

#### ***Recommendation***

*Man-hole covers should be secured to be level with the footway and works undertaken by various utility companies on footways should be inspected on completion to ensure reasonably level surfaces.*



There are 'Welcome to Hazel Grove' signs, mounted on two posts, located in the centre of the footway on both the north and south sides of New Moor Lane. The gap between the two posts supporting the signs is 1250mm, causing unnecessary obstructions.

#### ***Recommendation***

*We recommend that the signs are reviewed, possibly attached to just one post close to edge of the pavement.*

### **Pedestrian crossing point at the junction of New Moor Lane and Bramhall Moor Lane**

There are no dropped kerbs at this junction, resulting in restricted and difficult access for those using wheelchairs and other mobility aids and also for pram pushers.

#### ***Recommendation***

*Dropped kerbs should be installed on both sides of Bramhall Moor Lane where it joins New Moor Lane.*

**Pedestrian crossing point at the junction of Bramhall Moor Lane and unnamed road leading north towards non-public entrance to Stepping Hill Hospital. (Between 24 and 26 Bramhall Moor Lane)**

There is no dropped kerb on the side adjacent to 24 Bramhall Moor Lane resulting in restricted and difficult access for those using wheelchairs and other mobility aids and also for pram pushers.

***Recommendation***

*A dropped kerb should be installed where the footway crosses the unnamed road adjacent to 24 Bramhall Moor Lane.*

**Footway 26 – 48 Bramhall Moor Lane**

This footway is extremely narrow, the problem being exacerbated by overgrown vegetation from some of the gardens in this terrace. Pedestrians are forced to walk in single file. Meeting pedestrians travelling in the opposite direction means someone has to step into the highway. Anyone requiring support from a carer whilst travelling along this piece of footway would find it very difficult.

Stretches of the footway measure less than 600mm wide. Disability Discrimination Act recommends a minimum 1200mm width which should be kept free of obstructions. Department of Transport guidance recommends a minimum width of 2000mm.



***Recommendation***

*We recommend that the overgrown vegetation is cut back and householders are advised that vegetation should not extend beyond the boundary line of the gardens. This needs to be monitored and enforced.*

*Whilst the removal of overgrown vegetation will improve the situation, the footway will remain unacceptably narrow. We recommend that speed controls are introduced to a maximum of 20 mph on this stretch of highway to improve the safety of pedestrians.*

## Pavement Parking Bramhall Moor Lane



A vehicle was parked partly on the already very narrow pavement resulting in difficult passing for pedestrians and impossible for wheelchairs or pushchairs.

### **Recommendation**

*We will continue to lobby national government to introduce legislation to ban pavement parking. In the meantime, the local authority should be using all possible powers to prevent pavement parking and enforce restrictions.*

## Lamp post/bus stop obstruction on Bramhall Moor Lane

A lamp post/bus stop is sited in the centre of the footway. At the widest point, nearest the highway, the width between the post and the highway is 900mm. Between the post and the grass verge is 550mm.

### **Recommendation**

*Whilst the re-siting of the lamp post would be ideal, we propose reducing the size of the grass verge at this point to create a wider, safer footway.*



The grass verge was observed as a positive aspect of the environment with a number of trees, some in blossom on the review days.

### **Recommendation**

*The addition of a bench in the area of the grass verge is proposed as a resting point for those who require it. Ownership of the grass verge is not clear. Cllr Baynham suggested that it may be hospital trust estate. She kindly agreed to check this out on our behalf.*

## Traffic

Traffic travelling at excessive speed, at very close proximity to narrow pavements is daunting for pedestrians. HGV's are particularly intimidating and cause an uncomfortable backdraft. This is even worse during wet weather.

### **Recommendation**

*In locations where the footway is unacceptably narrow, we recommend that speed controls are introduced to a maximum of 20 mph to improve the safety of pedestrians.*

### **Entrance to hospital grounds from Bramhall Moor Lane**



On the review that took place on a weekday, vehicles were parked all along the footway, restricting access for pedestrians, wheelchairs and pushchairs. It was also noted that the refuge point for crossing this road had been removed at the start of



hospital construction work and not yet been replaced. As a result pedestrians are required to cross a 4 lane carriageway to continue along the footway on Bramhall Moor Lane or to reach hospital departments and car parks on the opposite side of the entrance road.

### **Recommendation**

*Without knowledge of the actual boundary between the council's responsibilities and Stepping Hill Hospital Trust estate we recommend that pavement parking is not allowed and restrictions are enforced. We also recommend that the refuge is replaced and a controlled crossing point put in place to ensure a safe crossing point for pedestrians.*

### **Debrief Area**

As we summarised our observations at the end of our planned route it was noted that personal security was not seen as a problem on this route which is open with good natural surveillance.

In the debrief location it was observed that the footway continuing into the hospital estate, adjacent to the staff car park, was obstructed by mature trees making the route difficult for pedestrians and dangerous for wheelchair users.



## Unplanned extension to the route

On the first of the two reviews, participants suggested that we continue to walk through the hospital estate and exit via Poplar Grove for our return to the starting point of our walk. We recognise that this is Stepping Hill Hospital Trust Estate and that major construction works are taking place. However, we feel that the points raised are valid and are briefly documented here.



It was observed that the footways are very narrow in certain areas and pavement parking made them impassable in some locations. The footway is also uneven due to the spread of tree roots.

Access to and from the bus terminus on Poplar Grove is dangerous for walkers and wheelers. There are no controlled crossing points. Pedestrians have to cross two roads at a busy junction, with limited visibility due to vegetation on the refuge.

## Recommendation

*It is recommended that the hospital trust is asked to review pedestrian safety during the construction works and that the council, hospital trust and TFGM review the safety of the bus terminus.*

## Summary

It is our belief that all pedestrian journeys (walking or wheeling) should be safe, accessible and pleasant. This important route between a major supermarket, bus stop and a busy regional hospital was none of these, due to:

- Uneven surfaces and narrow, obstructed pathways making it dangerous for all users.
- The proximity of fast-moving traffic, particularly heavy goods vehicles, is dangerous and intimidating.
- Lack of drop kerbs make it unusable for all but the most intrepid wheelers.
- Lack of signage make it difficult for people unfamiliar with the area to find their way.
- There are no facilities to sit and rest on the entire route, and precious few to stop and get your breath.

Stockport is signed up to Greater Manchester Vision Zero which aims to stop all road deaths and life-changing injuries. Included in the action plan to deliver this vision is creating safer streets, setting safe speed limits and stopping anti-social road user behaviour. We believe that our recommendations will assist in achieving Vision Zero in this part of Stockport.

Cllr Baynham, Cabinet Member for Parks, Highways & Transport Services, confirmed that the council is committed to adopt the wider Greater Manchester 20mph speed limit for all residential roads. However, it was explained that issues have arisen regarding the requirement for traffic calming measures causing resistance from some residents. We believe that 20mph should be adopted for all residential roads and also for through routes when other safety factors cannot be mitigated.

Vision Zero also commits to increasing funding to the Active Travel Network. Active Travel aims include providing appropriate infrastructure, adaptations and space on our streets. Cllr Baynham confirmed holding recent discussions with Active Travel Commissioner, Dame Sarah Storey regarding funding for local schemes from the Greater Manchester Active Travel budget. We would welcome additional priority given to Active Travel schemes.

We understand that an agreement between the hospital trust and Sainsbury's is being considered for patients to use the supermarket car park. This would increase the importance of the route surveyed.

## Conclusion

This street review has demonstrated that a number of improvements are required to make this route fit for walking:

- removal of obstructions
- reduction of speed limits
- improvement of crossing points
- maintenance of footways
- addition of dropped kerbs

This would create a safer, more accessible and pleasant environment and make this route more useable for walking and wheeling.

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