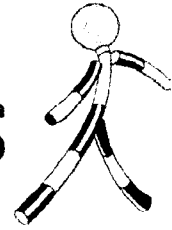


LIVING STREETS



Bakewell Community Street Audit Report

**A report on the quality of the street environment for people on foot
in Bakewell**

By Tom Franklin

Living Streets

August 2004

Contents

Contents	2
Living Streets	3
Executive Summary	4
How to read this report	5
Introduction	6
General Observations	9
Main Findings	11
A) Road layout and space allocation	12
B) Crossing points and desire lines	17
C) Facilities and signage	23
D) Footway surfaces and obstructions.....	27
E) Maintenance and enforcement issues.....	29
F) Personal security.....	31
G) Aesthetics	33
H) Traffic.....	34
Recommendations	35

Living Streets

Living Streets (formerly The Pedestrians Association) promotes the development of streets and public spaces that people on foot can use and enjoy. Formed in 1929, its aims are to:

- Raise awareness of the importance of clean, attractive public spaces for local quality of life, urban regeneration, neighbourhood renewal and social inclusion;
- Promote the importance of high density, mixed use developments to create walkable communities;
- Promote good practice in design, maintenance and management through conferences, seminars and training; and
- Empower the public through the provision of advice and information.

Community Street Audits were developed by Living Streets to improve local conditions for people on foot, by assessing the existing walking environment. Living Streets has undertaken audits for a wide range of clients including local authorities, Government agencies and developers.

Living Streets is registered as The Pedestrians Association, Charity No. 206006

Executive Summary

The Brief

This report, commissioned from Living Streets by Bakewell Town Council in partnership with Transport 2000 (and jointly funded by Derbyshire County Council, Derbyshire Dales District Council, Peak District National Park Authority, Transport 2000, and Bakewell Town Council), looks at the quality of the street environment in the centre of Bakewell - along Bridge Street, Rutland Square, Matlock Street, and North Church Street - from the perspective of people on foot. The audit, conducted in March 2004, identifies where problems and opportunities exist and recommends works for improvement or remediation.

The process, and this report, is not intended to balance the needs of pedestrians with the needs of traffic. Rather, the aim is to provide an assessment of what makes walking good and bad in Bakewell. Traffic issues are likely to be investigated in other consultation and assessment exercises – this process offers a counterbalance to those studies.

The Method

The audit area was refined in discussion with members of the town council and Transport 2000. Routes were identified by Living Streets and then walked with local people, during the daytime and in the evening, identifying good and bad points along the way.

Our Findings

Bakewell is a beautiful, busy and friendly market town. It is possible to sense the pride which people feel about Bakewell. The centre of the town is compact and most facilities – shopping, social or leisure - are within walking distance. To the visitor, Bakewell feels like a safe and friendly place to be.

Recent improvements to the side streets around the market have improved conditions for pedestrians, and the council should be congratulated on this and other work. However, many problems still exist.

Major problems for pedestrians are:

- The overwhelming dominance of through traffic along the main roads in Bakewell.
- The narrow pavements along the same roads – including the bridge itself.
- Poor crossing facilities, making it difficult and dangerous to cross the road at key pedestrian desire lines.
- No co-ordinated approach to the layout of public space in the centre of Bakewell, creating an atmosphere of disorder and disorganisation, and poor use of scarce space.

The first two points listed above create, in some parts of Bakewell, some of the worst conditions for pedestrians that Living Streets has seen in the UK. For Bakewell residents who have to live with these conditions every day, it is natural to get used to such conditions and to accept them. However, we hope that expectations will be

raised as a result of this report. Solutions can be found to the challenging conditions for pedestrians in Bakewell – and those solutions will ensure that Bakewell remains an attractive place for visitors and residents alike.

Recommendations

Recommendations in this report have not been prioritised. It is for Bakewell and its residents and businesses to decide what is right for Bakewell. However, certain issues surfaced which, in the author's opinion, need careful consideration, and might have the most positive impact on walking in Bakewell. Other issues, some of less obvious concern to local people, lend themselves particularly well to a project-based approach to problem solving. These have been highlighted in the section of this report entitled Recommendations.

Readers are encouraged to consider the range of suggestions contained within the Main Findings section – these are worthy of implementation in their own right, and may also form the basis for other projects.

It is pleasing to note that some concerns that are raised in this report have been addressed by works separately commissioned by the County Council. Notably the widening of the pavement outside the Rutland Hotel, an improved crossing at the Buxton Road entry into the roundabout, the removal of unsightly roundabout signs and reduction in size of the A6 direction signs.

How to read this report

The Introduction contains background information on why walking matters, and the policy context.

General Observations gives a short overview of the audit area, its pedestrian problems and challenges.

The Main Findings section gives a detailed analysis of the street environment, from the perspective of people on foot.

Recommendations presents task-based suggestions for improvement.

Introduction

Why walking matters and what pedestrians need

The Government wants to make walking easier, more pleasant and safer. In the DETR document *Encouraging Walking: advice to local authorities*, four main reasons for this are cited:

- Walking is good for people. Getting out for a walk occasionally is better for most people than sitting in an armchair all the time.
- Walking is good for communities. Streets are safer with people in them.
- Walking is an essential part of most public transport journeys, and of some journeys mainly by car.
- There is a lot of it about. Walking accounts for more than 25% of all journeys, and for some 80% of journeys less than a mile. Anything that makes those journeys easier, more pleasant, and safer is benefiting a lot of people.

Specific qualities have been identified as conducive to increased levels of walking. To encourage walking, the pedestrian environment should be:

- **Connected.** A comprehensive network, with few or no dead-ends, avoiding or reducing the number of busy roads to be crossed, which can be a significant deterrent to walking.
- **Convenient.** Direct paths and routes without detours or diversions from desire lines and without restrictions. Avoidance of underpasses and footbridges.
- **Comfortable.** Smooth surfaces, more than adequate widths, absence of obstructions, avoidance of steep gradients and steps, good microclimate, good lighting, separation from vehicular traffic, or a traffic-calmed environment, a feeling of safety and security, provision of adequate seating and interpretation centres in appropriate locations.
- **Convivial.** Pedestrian areas and routes should be spaces that encourage human interaction and improve personal security. Key elements include diversity of streetscape, landscape, buildings, activities and furnishings, frequent passers-by, space for relaxation and enjoyment, interesting ground floor activities, views in and out of buildings.
- **Conspicuous.** Legibility of routes through design and through signing of streets, destinations, public transport stops and buildings.

“The Five C’s” - especially ‘convivial’ – indicate that walking is about stopping, as well as moving. In addition to transport, walking is about:

- **Meeting** friends and neighbours;
- **Watching** people;
- **Recreation** and play;
- **Commerce**; and
- **Eating and drinking.**

Essentially, walking is about **places** as well as **routes**.

Above all, pedestrians need:

- Enough space;
- A sense of safety, free from fear of crime or traffic;
- Clean, well-managed and well-maintained environments;
- Short distances and direct routes, with minimum detours and waits;
- Places to stop and basic facilities like benches and toilets;
- Information and signage;
- Beauty and interest – art, trees, fountains; and
- Proper planning, not afterthoughts.

The policy context

The growth in the attention given to the walking environment reflects the shift in the climate of opinion on transport and in particular the car/pedestrian balance. Encouraging walking is seen as a way to reduce the number of trips made by car, thus reducing congestion and improving the health of the individual. More pedestrian movement increases the vitality of an area and contributes to its social and economic regeneration.

The 1998 **Transport White Paper**, *'A New Deal for Transport: better for everyone'* represented a change in national transport policy to include an emphasis on improving conditions for pedestrians and cyclists.

Among other measures, local authorities would be expected to give **more priority to walking** by:

- Reallocating space to pedestrians;
- Providing more direct and convenient pedestrian routes;
- Improving footpath maintenance and cleanliness;
- Providing more pedestrian crossings where pedestrians want to cross;
- Reducing waiting times for pedestrians at signals and giving them priority in the allocation of time at junctions where this supports more walking;
- Dealing with those characteristics of traffic that deter people from walking; and
- Introducing 20mph zones.

The **Prime Minister**, in his speech on Liveability in April 2001, identified the quality of streets as vital to stronger local communities and an improved local quality of life:

"...the one public service we all use all the time is the streets where we live. And in too many places, streets and public spaces have become dirty, ugly and dangerous. Britain needs to feel proud of its public spaces, not ashamed. We need local parks which are well looked-after and easily reached with a pushchair. We need streets to be free of litter, dog mess and mindless vandalism."

In November 2001, in response to the Transport Select Committee's report on Walking in Towns and Cities, the Government agreed that action is needed to increase walking in our urban areas; that local transport plans should adopt a formal order in which the needs of pedestrians are placed first; that more pedestrian-friendly crossings should be provided and environments where guardrails are not needed should be created; and that walking should increase as:

"...people choose to walk more often, both as a means of transport and as

something that is enjoyable in its own right.”

The Bakewell Community Street Audit

This Audit forms an important part of the Transport 2000 project in Bakewell, part of its “Revitalising Communities on Main Roads” initiative, supported by the Community Fund. Up to 50 people took part in the audit. Local auditors included town councillors, people of all ages, people in wheelchairs and with other forms of mobility restrictions. The local police officer, traffic warden and local council officers also took part.

The audit offers an overview of the local walking environment, from the perspective of local people on foot. This report identifies problems and opportunities and suggests possible improvements. We hope the report will provide a positive input to local people’s plans for Bakewell.



Thanks go to the many local people who contributed to the audit

General Observations

Balancing the needs of people and traffic

For decades the dual roles performed by the streets of Bakewell in accommodating vehicular traffic and people on foot have been maintained in an uneasy balance.

Through recent decades there has been a presumption that, although people in cars are not always more numerous, they are somehow more 'important'. As the Select Committee report on urban walking, "Walking in Towns and Cities" says:

"In contrast to the changes made to every town and city to ease motor transport, walking has been made ever more unpleasant. Pedestrians have been treated with contempt. In a myriad of ways when we walk we are treated with less respect than when we drive. Engineers and economists have even considered our time less valuable when they assess new projects."

Walking in Towns and Cities, Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs Select Committee, May 2001

More recently, there has been a shift away from accommodating car use to managing it, coupled with a determination to actively encourage walking in recognition of the key role walking has in building strong, safe, inclusive communities

There are many opportunities to improve the balance of provision for different transport modes. Space allocation to people and traffic in some places bears little relation to the needs and levels of usage by different modes, and elsewhere the requirements of free-flowing traffic greatly inconvenience and endanger pedestrians.

The case for pedestrian flow and activity counts

Even today, the relative 'invisibility' of pedestrian movement, compared with the high profile of the private car, which utilises large amounts of space, whether moving or sitting idle, can result in a misperception of the relative economic and social importance of different transport modes. Measurement of pedestrian and vehicle flows in the audit area, both in terms of numbers and of their local economic and social impact, are invaluable in providing a robust, objective response to any presumption in favour of motor traffic.

The Future for Bakewell

Bakewell is a bustling market town, which relies heavily upon regional shopping and tourists for its vitality and prosperity. But people have choices – people expect a high quality tourist and shopping environment and they will (quite literally) vote with their feet if they don't get it. Local auditors reported that some shops along Buxton Road frequently changed hands – almost certainly because of the lack of passing foot trade. This shows that Bakewell can't rest on its laurels.



One of several empty shops along Buxton Road

Without good planning, and investment in the public realm, Bakewell will struggle to compete in the future.

Those towns that have been most successful in encouraging walking have done so incrementally over many years, but have started with a clear vision of where they want to be in ten or twenty years time.

Will Bakewell continue to treat its public places as little more than traffic spaces, or should people on foot be better provided for? A booming economy and a vibrant and safe town centre depends on more visitors – can a more vehicle-friendly layout and yet more parking deliver more people into Bakewell, or is the roads network already at capacity at times of greatest demand?

Or could a more people-friendly town deliver greater economic and social vitality? More pedestrians and fewer cars could mean more space for everyone - including for those motorists who genuinely cannot change to more sustainable transport modes.

Local aspirations and the tempo of change

Inevitably the process of changing the physical structure of public space can never keep pace with the changes in community priorities. Local councils can expect demands for improvement to the streetscape to continue, while local people will continue to be dissatisfied with the pace and extent of that change.

This is not the result of unrealistic local aspirations, or a lack of action by the councils. It reflects the constantly changing demands placed on public space, and the need for projects, like this one, that raise the profile of walking and make a case for increased spending on this vital component of all our lives.

Main Findings

Analysis of findings

The findings of our audits have been assessed to form the basis of an analysis of the audit area under eight headings, as follows:

A) Road layout and space allocation

The share of space allocated to different users and the relationship of different elements of the streetscape to each other

B) Crossing points and desire lines

Both formal (Zebras, Pelicans, Puffins) and informal (no specific provision), including consideration of desire lines, i.e. the routes people most want to take

C) Facilities and signage

Toilets, benches, litterbins, lighting, trees, and signs for pedestrians.

D) Footway surfaces and obstructions

Quality and mix of materials; footway condition; inspection and hole covers; positioning, alignment and condition of street furniture; and temporary obstructions including cars, advertising boards, shop front displays and road works

E) Maintenance and enforcement issues

Litter; footway cleanliness; repair and patching; flyposting and graffiti; and parking enforcement

F) Personal security

Lighting levels, sightlines, natural surveillance, exit routes, and anti-social behaviour.

G) Aesthetics

Beauty and interest, public art, fountains, statues, green space - noise, smell, and ugliness

H) Traffic

Traffic speed and volume, air pollution, noise and smell



Where recommendations are included within this section, they are marked by the Living Streets logo.

A) Road layout and space allocation

In many parts of Bakewell, street space is extremely tight – centuries-old streets struggle to meet all the modern needs placed on them. Choices have to be made about the allocation of the available limited space. The current allocation reflects the trend of the past 80 years to maximise space allocated to vehicles as private car ownership increased.

But there are also some small examples of a more recent reversal of this approach, where extra space has been allocated to pedestrians. The seating area outside the Bath gardens is popular, as is the part-pedestrianisation of streets such as Water Lane.

However, there are several parts of Bakewell where difficult decisions still need to be taken to re-balance the allocation of space, which is currently greatly weighted against people on foot.

Junction of Baslow Road/Station Road/Bridge Street

This junction, with the monument in the middle creating a roundabout feel, takes up a large amount of space. There are two carriageway entrances to Station Road: one from Baslow Road (on the corner with the cottage) and another from Bridge Street (near the car park). This makes for a very wide junction, which is difficult to cross on foot. Local auditors noted that drivers sometimes get confused by the layout of this junction.



Remove one of the traffic lanes turning into Station Road and consider reallocating the space to wider pavements – either on the Baslow Road/Station Road corner, or on the Bridge Street/Station Road corner, or both.



Two cars turning into Station Lane simultaneously. Remove one of these lanes and tighten up junction

Consider widening the pavement on the Bridge Street/Station Road corner, and moving the Cross's Folly monument to this position.

The Bridge

Bakewell's famous ancient bridge currently allows for two-way traffic, with a very narrow pavement on either side. It is very difficult for two people to pass on foot on one of these pavements, and local auditors told stories of people losing their umbrellas or shopping after being clipped by the wing-mirrors of passing vehicles. Indeed, from what was witnessed during the audits,



Conditions on the Bridge are hazardous for pedestrians

it is surprising that collisions between pedestrians and vehicles are not more common. The white lines along the middle of the bridge exacerbate the situation for pedestrians. By keeping on the correct side of the white line, two HGVs can pass each other at the expense of people walking along the pavement. Without the white lines, they would need to negotiate around each other.

It has been suggested that pedestrians should be encouraged to enter Bakewell via a different route. Apart from the fact that the other route does not have pavements either, this would be a pity. This bridge is an ancient part of Bakewell. It affords beautiful views of the River Wye and the meadow known as Scot's Garden. It is one of the main attractions for visitors to Bakewell. Visitors should be encouraged, if possible, to use the bridge as the entry point to Bakewell – but it first needs to be made safer.



Consider installing traffic lights at both ends of the bridge and allowing only one-way traffic flow at any particular time. At the same time, widen the pavement on the car park side of the bridge (the side most heavily used by pedestrians) so that people on foot can pass each other with ease, and can stop to take in the views of the river.

Alternatively consider a second, pedestrian-only, bridge close to the main bridge, on the Scot's Garden side. However, this would need to be close enough to the existing bridge and car park for people to make use of it use, and a crossing would need to be installed across Bridge Street. It is, however, appreciated that this is likely to be opposed by those who would wish to protect the views of the historic bridge.

Bridge Street, by Brocklehursts Shop

The pavement at this point on Bridge Street is very narrow. Indeed, it is hardly wide enough for two people to pass without one of them moving into the carriageway. The traffic on this section of Bridge Street is one way, but there are two lanes for traffic, with the left-hand lane being for traffic turning left into Market Street. When this street became one-way, some of the carriageway should have been re-allocated for pavement.



Very narrow pavement along Bridge Street - reallocate space from the carriageway



Widen the pavement. Reduce traffic to one lane. This would allow room for people on foot to pass each other with ease, as well as for shops to have small displays on the pavements, encouraging a

more ambient shopping environment.

Coach Drop-off Point by Water Lane in Bridge Street

The coach park takes up a large amount of space in this little square, at the heart of Bakewell's shopping area. It was noted that this was sometimes used for illegal parking. Space is tight in this part of Bakewell, and using this as a drop-off point may not be the best use of the space that is available. Local auditors reported that there was little consultation before this drop-off point was installed.

It was suggested that the drop-off point might be used for disabled parking (possibly on Mondays only), or that it should be removed altogether and a little civic square created in its place. Local auditors reported that the area was used by carol singers at Christmas, and it could become a greater focal point for civic events in the town, including during the visitor season.



Move the coach drop-off point to the car park at the Agricultural Centre, which is easily within walking distance of the centre of Bakewell.

Reallocate the space to the square, and create an open air civic entertainment space. Consider installing public art in this square, or a drinking fountain.



Remove coach drop-off point, and create a small civic space

Taxi rank on Rutland Square

Local auditors questioned how much this taxi rank was used. Most thought that it was not heavily used, and some wanted it replaced with a wider pavement, whilst others thought it was a more suitable location for disabled parking. A very narrow part of the pavement is outside the Bakewell Pudding Shop – a shame, because the proprietors clearly put a lot of pride into their window displays. The pavement is too narrow for people to stop and look.



Consider using some or all of this space for disabled parking instead. Alternatively, widen the pavement either along the whole length, or at particular points such as outside the pudding shop.



Consider replacing taxi rank with wider pavement or disabled parking bays

Rutland Hotel and War Memorial

The Rutland Hotel is a focal point of Bakewell, joined more recently in history by the distinctive war memorial. However, the priority of accommodating traffic growth has turned the war memorial into a major roundabout (complete with ugly roundabout paraphernalia, such as illuminated bollards), and this area has become a major barrier for people walking to different parts of Bakewell (we witnessed several pedestrians having to walk across the middle of the roundabout, where there were no facilities for them at all). The war memorial is in danger of being hit by large articulated lorries (local auditors told of articulated lorries getting wedged across the road). It's become very difficult to access the Rutland Hotel on foot, and the pavement in front of the hotel is extremely narrow. The pavement around the corner by the Edinburgh Woollen Mill Shop is also extremely narrow, and feels even more

dangerous and unpleasant because it is below the road surface. Pedestrians come face-to-face with the wheels of large articulated lorries as their drivers attempt to manoeuvre around the roundabout.

Changing this part of Bakewell would be a big step to take, and would no doubt be controversial. However, we think Bakewell needs to begin the debate about whether the space taken by the roundabout could be better used.



Consider completely re-designing the Buxton Road/Matlock Street/Rutland Square junction. There might be several options, including the following:

- (i) Move the war memorial currently in the middle of the roundabout to a more sensitive setting where people could have access to it to read the inscriptions – possibly in the market square, to the other end of**



Consider a complete redesign of this area, to free up space for pedestrians

- Rutland Square, or to the little square along Bridge Street (near the current coach drop-off point).**
- (ii) Replace the roundabout with a traffic-light controlled junction – this would release space currently taken up by the roundabout, and stop the need for HGVs to undertake an ‘S’-shape manoeuvre when turning from Buxton Road into Matlock Street.**
- (iii) With the space made available, tighten up the junction of Rutland Square with the A6, widening the very narrow pavement around the**

corner by the Edinburgh Woollen Mill Shop.

- (iv) With the introduction of a traffic-light controlled junction, ensure that there is an ample pedestrian phase to cross on all arms of the junction, including a step free environment.
- (v) Consider moving the bus stop area from its current location to a new location – possibly around the coach park over the footbridge, or along Matlock Street. However, the implications for footfall along Buxton Road would need to be considered carefully.

Buxton Road

Buxton Road presents some major challenges with regard to space allocation. Large HGVs travel along Buxton Road in both directions, with barely space to pass. On either side of the road, shops and homes open directly onto narrow pavements which are not wide enough for two people to pass each other. We abandoned this part of the audit two-thirds of the way along Buxton Road because auditors no longer felt safe.

In terms of the re-allocation of road space along Buxton Road, options are very

limited. However, there are a series of actions which can be taken to reduce the dominant 'feel' of traffic along Buxton Road, which are detailed elsewhere. These include: a 20 mph zone, reducing the scale of traffic signs and removing white lines, installing traffic calming, and introducing/enforcing parking restrictions along the street.



Pavements on Buxton Road are very narrow, and the traffic can be very fast

B) Crossing points and desire lines

Being able to cross the road safely and with ease is a fundamental requirement for a good walking environment. Pedestrians need good connections, particularly to make shopping easy, efficient and enjoyable. The harder it is to cross the street when shopping, the less likely it is that people will do so – and the shops will suffer as a result. During the audit, we considered where people wanted to cross the street, and how easy and safe it was for them to do so.

Along Bridge Street, Matlock Street and Buxton Road, measures can be taken to improve both formal and informal crossing points. In particular, considering the relatively high proportion of people in Bakewell who have difficulty with steps, it ought to be possible to create a route along Bridge Street, Matlock Street, or Buxton Road which is completely step-free. Where possible, the surface of any side junctions should be raised to that of the pavement to create a walking route which is not just step-free, but level too. Where raised tables are not practical, dropped kerbs could be used as an alternative.

It should also be possible to cross over these three main streets with the maximum of ease, where people want to cross. This should include either end of the Bridge.

The Bridge/Station Road/Baslow Road

At present, it is difficult to cross over Baslow Road at this junction. This is particularly so when crossing from the Scot's Gardens side, because it is very difficult to see vehicles approaching from across the bridge. At present few pedestrians cross over – not surprising, given the difficulty in doing so. However, a crossing here could help attract people across to Scot's Gardens.



It is difficult and unpleasant to cross Bridge Street, by Scot's Gardens



Consider installing a crossing at this point, to allow visitors to cross the road and walk along

Scot's Gardens. This might be done in conjunction with the installation of a traffic-light controlled one-way system over the bridge.

Bridge Street/Bath Street/Castle Street

At this junction, because the traffic is approaching from different directions at considerable speed, it is difficult to cross from Bridge Street to Bath Street. Castle Street is also a very wide junction, and thus not easy to cross when walking along Bridge Street.



Consider increasing the size of the traffic island in the middle of Bridge Street. Move the island eastwards so that buses have room to

get round the corner from Bath Street into Bridge Street without mounting the pavement. Bring the pavement out on the left hand side.

Tighten the junction of Castle Street, and put in a raised table to make it easier for pedestrians when walking along Bridge Street.



This is a difficult junction for pedestrians. Move the traffic island, and tighten up the entrance to Castle Street

Bridge Street/Market Street



Raise the carriageway to the level of the pavement, to create a step-free, level crossing for pedestrians

When walking along Bridge Street, there are no dropped kerbs on either side of the junction with Market Street, making this an impossible junction for people in wheelchairs or with mobility problems to negotiate. Parking on the corners with Bridge Street causes obstructions and crossing difficulties.



Consider a raised side table across the entrance to Market Street to create a level, even crossing for

pedestrians. Alternatively, put in dropped kerbs on either side.

Controlled pedestrian crossing Anchor Square/Rutland Square/Bridge Street

This pedestrian crossing was considered to work reasonably well. People did not have to wait for long periods to cross, and local auditors felt that it was generally safe. However, the crossing had created a large amount of clutter in what is a very small space – some nine posts, to support the set of traffic lights. Possibly a more

informal type of crossing would suffice here. Consideration should be given as to whether it might be neater, and simpler, to convert this into a zebra crossing, including the removal of all guard-railing.



Consider making this crossing into a zebra crossing. Consider closing the small link road for vehicles turning from Bridge Street into Anchor Square, to create a new pedestrian space.



Consider simplifying this crossing by installing a zebra crossing and removing traffic light clutter

Rutland Square roundabout

In the previous section, we referred to the need to reconsider the design and use of this space. In this section, we look in particular at pedestrians' needs to cross at this roundabout. On several 'arms' of this roundabout, there are either no pedestrian crossing facilities, or inadequate ones. The lack of crossing facilities at this major junction is creating severance between the different parts of Bakewell. It is impeding people's movement around the centre of the town. Of course, some people are still crossing, but often in dangerous conditions.

Rutland Square, from bus station across to the Edinburgh Woollen Mill Shop

This road is very difficult to cross at present. It is an important crossing point, as the only formal crossing is quite a distance up the street near Anchor Square. At present, there are no dropped kerbs on either side, or on the central reservation. Apart from a small area of smooth paving, the central reservation is composed of a cobbled surface, making it dangerous to walk across (particularly when it is icy in winter). We witnessed several older people struggling to cross this road.

Crossing Matlock Street from Taylor's Pharmacy to Rutland Hotel

Local auditors considered this to be a very dangerous crossing point, because it was impossible to see the traffic coming around the corner of Buxton Road. Several local auditors reported that they would not visit Taylor's Pharmacy because they considered it hazardous to cross the junction

Some considered that a light controlled crossing was needed, but others thought this would be unwelcome urbanisation. Another option would be a zebra crossing on a raised table.



Install a crossing on every arm of the roundabout.

On the crossing from the memorial gardens to the Edinburgh Woollen Mills shop, install a raised crossing facility, or dropped kerbs. Remove the cobbled surface on the central reservation, which is particularly slippery in winter, and replace with grass or flowers. Remove part of this central reservation and widen out where people can cross – issue of buses though.



Pedestrians struggle to cross this junction

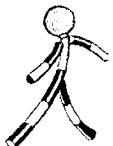
On the crossing from Taylors Pharmacy to the Rutland Hotel, consider installing a raised zebra crossing.

Matlock Street pedestrian crossing

A light-controlled crossing had been installed on Matlock Street close to the Rutland roundabout. This crossing worked reasonably well. However, it could be improved. People waiting to cross were sometimes getting in the way of people walking past. More space is needed, and could be created through the use of 'build-outs' on either side of the junction. This crossing could also benefit from advanced stop lines for bicycles. These would aid cyclists, and also create a safe zone between the vehicles and pedestrians crossing.



Build out the pavement on either side of the crossing



Widen pavement to ease congestion from people waiting to cross. Lengthen the 'green man' phase by at least two more seconds to allow people to cross in comfort. Install advance stop lines for cyclists at this and other pedestrian crossings, to create a zone between the revving traffic and pedestrians crossing.

Matlock Street/Granby Road

The mouth of this junction is very wide, making it difficult for pedestrians to cross. The tactile paving is considerably off the desire line, and not properly installed. Very wide road for people to cross. Would be nice to be able to cross in a straight line. Tactile pavement needs repair, not installed properly.



Tighten up the mouth of this junction. Install a raised table across the carriageway, so that pedestrians can walk in a straight line when walking along Matlock Street. Re-install tactile paving.



The tactile paving to cross this junction is just visible on the far left of this picture - considerably away from the desire line

Buxton Road/North Church Street

It was very difficult to cross Buxton Road from the Square to North Church Street, particularly with cars parked around the junction. North Church Street is sometimes used as a rat-run, with traffic approaching Buxton Road at some speed.



Consider raising the carriageway to the level of the pavement across North Church Street, possibly with a rumble strip either side, to allow for easy pedestrian movement. Enforce parking restrictions around the junction.



Buxton Road – junctions with Bath Street and Mill Streets

All three of these junctions are very wide. They would all benefit from being tightened up, with raised tables installed to create level crossing points for pedestrians.



Raise the carriageway to the level of the pavement at each of these junctions.



This junction is unpleasant for pedestrians, because of the entrances to the builder's yard and the car park. With this and other side road junctions along Buxton Road, and install raised tables to create step free, level crossing for pedestrians

C) Facilities and signage

Pedestrians need facilities as much as drivers do – places to rest, toilets, bins and planting. When these facilities are brought together in a considered and effective way, they can help create a strong sense of place that actively encourages us to walk, but also to linger, to stroll, to talk and play. Provision of facilities for pedestrians along the audit route is uneven.

Community places in Bakewell



Bakewell needs a network public places for people to sit, meet, talk and watch the world go by. There are several of these along the streets that we audited already. These include the lovely Bath gardens next to the bus stops, the small gardens along Buxton Road, and the small paved area along Bridge Street, next to Water Lane. More could be done to make the most of these community spaces.



Identify opportunities to create stopping places for people on foot along Buxton Road, Bridge Street and Matlock Street. With public seating, a drinking fountain, noticeboards, planting, toilets and perhaps some play equipment and public art, the following locations could become vibrant community places:

- **Rutland Square, particularly if the design of the junction is improved to create more pedestrian space.**
- **The corner of Baslow Road/Station Road, if the pavement is widened on this corner and the Cross's Folly monument moved.**
- **The small square on Bridge Street, near Water Lane, if parking restrictions are enforced and the coach drop-off point is moved.**
- **The area in between Bridge Street and Anchor Square, if the carriageway is removed preventing cars turning directly from Bridge Street into Anchor Square.**

Toilets

While pubs and cafés offer some sort of toilet provision, their use is not open to all, and often requires a purchase to be made. It is also dependent on the premises being open. Many people need easily accessible toilet facilities, and will be discouraged or prevented from venturing out unless access to toilets (in good

condition) is assured.

The loss of public toilets is a national issue. Despite the introduction of some modern facilities to replace dilapidated and costly traditional toilet blocks, widespread provision of public toilets on the Victorian model is still a long way off.

Public toilets are provided in Granby Road, and also by the long stay car park on the other side of the River Wye. Local auditors did not mention toilets as a particular issue in Bakewell. However, we understand that during busy visitor times toilet provision is inadequate, particularly for women.



Review provision of public toilet facilities throughout the audit area (particularly the provision for women), with a view to ensuring good quality facilities are available. Ensure that in any signage review, public toilets are signposted throughout Bakewell.

Seating

The provision of public seating is an important consideration for a significant proportion of pedestrians. Without regular opportunities to stop and take a breather, many people cannot make anything but the very shortest trips on foot. Latest guidance on inclusive mobility from the Department for Transport¹ recommends public seating should be available at 50 metre intervals along key pedestrian routes like the streets audited in Bakewell.

Seating should be positioned as close to pedestrian routes as possible, without blocking them. Approach from behind should not be possible, and views should incorporate plenty of human activity. Seating should be warm to the touch (wooden, not stone or metal) and incorporate back and armrests. The provision of chairs as well as benches can permit the provision of seating in small spaces, and increase the variety and attraction of sitting places.

There are parts of Bakewell with lots of seating – for example, outside the memorial gardens. This is a beautiful, sunny spot, and the benches are good quality and



made of wood. Benches have been placed in other parts – for example, along Granby Road and in the little square on Bridge Street. The benches along the river front are worthy of note because of their beautiful location.

Identify possible locations for a network of seats at intervals of 50 metres or less along the main streets in Bakewell. Ensure seating is appropriate for older or less able users. These locations would include:

- **More seats within the Bath Gardens on Rutland Square**
- **Seating at every bus stop along the routes, including those along Matlock Street**
- **Seating near the junction of Bridge Street and Anchor Square.**

¹ Inclusive Mobility: a Guide to best practice on access to pedestrian and transport infrastructure, DfT, 2002

Bins

Local auditors thought that Bakewell was generally a very clean town, with limited litter problems. This suggests that litterbin provision is adequate.

Planting

Street trees and planting can add considerable beauty to a location, and are always popular with residents. Local people commented on the beauty of the Bath gardens in Bakewell and praised their upkeep, and the greenery along the river front. Some disappointment was expressed with the standard of planting around the war memorial in Rutland Square, and this is possibly linked to the poor location of the memorial.

If suggestions to reallocate road space are taken up, this will create extra space and new opportunities for planting. However, it is important to make sure that any new planting/street trees can be well tended.



Identify scope to introduce extra street trees, especially if new community spaces are created. Review planting maintenance budgets and regimes, to ensure existing provision can be managed and maintained.

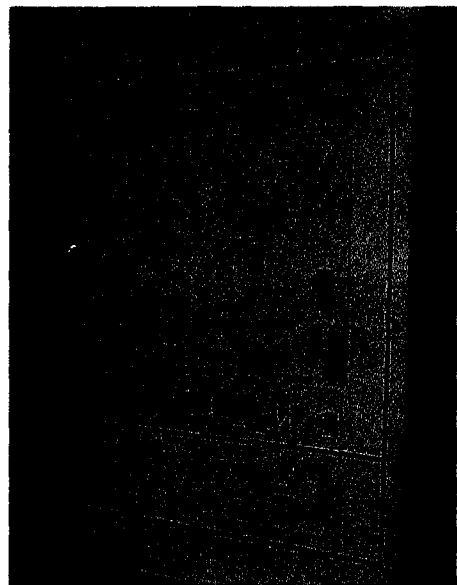
Consider planting trees in the Market Square, which local auditors reported can look very bland when it is being used as a car park.

Pedestrian Signage

As is the case throughout the country, pedestrian signage in Bakewell is sparse and inconsistent. There are maps on Granby Road for pedestrians. However, these have faded and are not easy for pedestrians to use. One particular problem we noted was that visitors to Bakewell were not aware that there were shops along Buxton Road. This could be remedied by a simple finger pointer at the corner of Rutland Street/North Church Street, to guide visitors around the corner.

While motorists are provided with a carefully designed and integrated network of signage across the whole country, pedestrians are expected to navigate using a huge variety of signage – it is rare to see a uniform network of signage in a single street, much less in a whole area. As a result, pedestrians must either read every single sign to discover whether it is relevant, or ignore them all.

Bakewell needs a network of pedestrian signage, aimed at visitors to the town who don't know their way around. To this end, the signage strategy should be tested with visitors before anything is installed, to make sure it works. Signage should include 3-D maps, finger pointers (including to shopping areas) and clear street name plates. Walking times should be shown on finger



The map on Granby Road has faded

pointers, to encourage people to walk.



Install pedestrian signage on the bend of Buxton Road, to encourage visitors to walk to the shops along Buxton road.

Install an integrated network of signage (street nameplates, fingerposts and information boards) for the whole of Bakewell.

Rationalise current signage in line with this network, removing surplus signs. Install new signs as necessary. Signage should be high contrast and indicate times and distances to destinations. Lettering should be embossed. Street nameplates should be installed on every arm of every junction and opposite all side entries.

Consider creating a 'visitor trail' around Bakewell – this would comprise an A4 walking map, showing a tourist walking route around Bakewell, with historical information at points of interest along the route. Metal 'pointers' could be placed in the pavement along the route, and blue plaques could be used on the side of historical buildings to give information to visitors.



A simple fingerpointer on this corner to guide pedestrians to the shops along Buxton Road

D) Footway surfaces and obstructions

Surfaces

Smooth even footways are a basic requirement for people on foot. Fear of a footway fall is the number one concern for older people making a decision to walk or not. Ten times as many people are admitted to accident and emergency departments due to footway falls as from car crashes.²

Although there were some places where the footway surface was in good condition (for example, along sections of Matlock Street), generally footway surface condition was poor.

There's much evidence of vehicles mounting pavements and cracking the paving stones. There are also many places where 'patch repairs' have been undertaken, with tarmac. For example, the condition of the footways on Bridge Street, by the junction with Bath Street, is poor.

The pavement at the side of the Rutland Hotel, along North Church Street, is made up of cobbles – which is very difficult to walk over and virtually impassable for people in wheelchairs.



Footway condition on Bridge Street



Conditions for people in wheelchairs are inadequate, especially along the side of the Rutland Hotel

Wheelchair users were especially dissatisfied with conditions at crossing points – dropped kerbs are very poorly installed, with only a few exceptions. At some crossing points footway widths are insufficient, generating obstruction and conflict. But provision of smooth, even and spacious crossing points should not be seen solely as the concern of people with 'special' needs – parents with baby buggies, tourists with wheeled suitcases, delivery drivers and shoppers using wheeled trolleys all need similar provision to wheelchair

users. Ultimately we all suffer some impairment from time to time – whether we are loaded with heavy shopping, distracted by our companions, or unable to see the footway due to crowds or poor lighting.

² Encouraging Walking: Advice to local authorities, DETR, March 2000



Identify a limited palette of footway surfacing materials for Bakewell, and stick to it. Initiate a programme of footway repair and replacement throughout the audit streets. Consider upgrading footway inspection regimes.

Obstructions

The biggest obstructions which we encountered in the audits were items of street furniture. All street furniture is potentially an obstruction – what is important is to make sure that street furniture is placed as sensitively as possible, to minimise the obstruction, and that redundant street furniture is removed. Poorly designed or badly positioned street furniture is the main footway obstruction.



Conduct a review of street clutter throughout Bakewell town centre, and remove (or relocate) items of street furniture which are causing unnecessary obstructions. These should include:

- **The large traffic signs blocking the pavement on the corner of Matlock Street/King Street**
- **The huge traffic sign which has been placed across the pavement, next to the entrance to Hebden Court, which is creating an obstruction for pedestrians**
- **The railings at the lower end of Up The Chimney (along Buxton Road), which is blocking the entrance for push chairs**
- **The large amount of clutter in the small square next to Water Lane, created by the coach drop-off point (if this drop-off point is removed, all of this clutter can be removed)**
- **The traffic light clutter around the junction of Bridge Street/Anchor Square, which might not be required if the crossing is converted into a zebra crossing.**



The traffic sign immediately outside Hebden Court



The railings at the lower end of the Chimney



The clutter in the small square on Bridge Street

E) Maintenance and enforcement issues

Cleanliness, graffiti and fly-posting

Local auditors considered street cleanliness to be of a good standard, although there were some limited problems with chewing gum. Similarly, graffiti and fly-posting were not identified as problems.

Footway Maintenance

As has already been stated, footway maintenance is – literally – patchy. More attention needs to be paid to the quality of reinstatement after street works, to ensure any improvement to footway quality is maintained.

Drainage

The drain by the junction of Bridge Street/Bath Street is messy – it gets flooded, and is also a trip hazard for people wearing heels. There was also a large puddle over a drain/service cover outside Holme Court apartments on Matlock Street.

Parking

Illegal parking was a widespread concern.

There was considerable evidence of drivers parking on the pavement. They were doing so in order not to block the carriageway for passing motorists – but were causing obstructions for pedestrians instead.

We were alarmed to see the National Trust parking on the pavement to sell National Trust membership. This van was taking up valuable pedestrian space within the small civic square along Bridge Street.

Local auditors discussed where the best place for disabled parking would be. One possibility was Water Lane. However, many auditors thought this would detract from the newly pedestrianised space. Another option could be the taxi rank on Bridge Street, which local auditors reported was poorly used.

Cars parked at the side of the Rutland Hotel blocked the footway. Local auditors reported that this was a problem particularly at weekends, when pedestrians were forced into the carriageway.



A common sight in Bakewell



The man from the National Trust, sitting in his van, parked on the pavement

Parking takes place along Buxton Road – in view of the narrow space, it would be better if there weren't parking.



Take action to ensure that the National Trust removes its van from the Bridge Street

square.

Ensure that car parking at the side of the Rutland Hotel does not block the pavement.

Remove the cobbles over the pavement and consider banning parking at the side of the hotel if the obstructions continue.

Review parking arrangements, and enforcement, throughout Bakewell town centre. Review the configuration of on-street parking. Wherever possible, encourage parking within the designated car parks on the other side of the River Wye. Enforce restrictions on pavement parking. Bollards can help with pavement parking, but should be used sparingly to ensure they do not become more clutter.



Parking along Buxton Road

F) Personal security

The decision to walk is strongly influenced by perceptions of how safe the journey will be. While danger from traffic is important, fear of street crime is probably an even greater concern.

Perceptions of personal security are much more important than actual crime levels, when it comes to making the decision to walk or not.

How safe a place feels is heavily influenced by the presence of other people nearby. **The most effective single initiative that can reduce fear of street crime is to encourage higher levels of legitimate pedestrian activity in public space throughout the day.**

Bakewell feels like a very safe place to be – both during the daytime and in the evening, and this view was shared by local auditors. At night time, the town centre was quiet and in some places lighting was inadequate. However, generally, Bakewell feels very safe.

There was some concern about heavy drinking in town centre pubs, leading to rowdy behaviour on the streets at weekends. This is problem for communities countryside. The long-term solution perhaps lies in a change of attitude towards alcohol consumption nationally, coupled with a more diverse evening economy that attracts different age groups indulging in a greater range of leisure activities.

For an environment to feel safe it needs five key characteristics:

1. **Good lighting levels**
2. **Clear sightlines**
3. **Natural surveillance**
4. **The presence of exit routes and**
5. **A lack of anti-social behaviour**

Lighting

The lighting throughout Bakewell, as a whole, was considered reasonably good. There were only a few places where improvements to lighting were considered important.

The medieval bridge was not lit at night. Although this made the bridge very dark, it was also very beautiful in the moonlight. Local auditors generally thought that the bridge should remain unlit (it was pointed out that the bridge was home to bats, which could also be disturbed if the bridge was lit – advice from a bat expert would be needed).

Some shops had their windows lit into the evening, but other did not. For example, the Brocklehurst Shop was unlit, as was the Tourist Information Office. A few shops had solid shutters – looking unsightly and reducing light – for example, Peak Store.

Lighting was poor at the top of Bath Street, between Up The Chimney and Anchor Square. Local auditors pointed out that this route was used in the evening by people visiting the Town Hall.

Along Mill Street, opposite Bagshaw Hill, the lighting was old-style yellow low pressure sodium lighting.

Improve lighting at the few locations where it is currently inadequate



for pedestrians. **Work with local businesses to encourage them to keep shop fronts lit into the evening, and to discourage the use of solid metal shutters. Avoid the use of yellow low-pressure sodium lights, which provide poor visibility for pedestrians, and use short and frequent lamp columns to reduce light pollution.**

Sightlines

Sightlines in an area with a traditional street pattern like Bakewell are usually very good.

Natural Surveillance

Natural surveillance from buildings is good in the main, although higher occupancy levels above the shops would boost this.

The most valuable natural surveillance comes from other people on foot. Any measure that encourages walking in Bakewell will make Bakewell a safer place to be.

Exit routes

Exit routes provide people with the opportunity to avoid confrontation or other potential danger. They are typically missing from pedestrian subways, footbridges and alleyways.

Exit routes were not considered a problem in Bakewell.

Anti-social behaviour

Concerns about anti-social behaviour focussed on rowdy behaviour during evenings – mostly Fridays. It was reported that anti-social behaviour focused around some of the pubs in the town centre. However, these need to be put into perspective – most local auditors felt that Bakewell was a safe place to be, even in the evenings. Close liaison with the police over this issue, coupled with other measures to encourage a broader-based evening economy, should be seen as a start to tackling this very complex problem.

G) Aesthetics

The beauty and interest, vitality and variety of the streetscene are what make people slow down and enjoy themselves. The sense that public space is valued by those who live in it, use it and care for it encourages us all to value it too.

Baslow Road/Station Road

The monument in the middle of the junction of Baslow Road/Station Road is lost in the middle of a traffic island. It is difficult to cross to see the monument, and traffic mounts the monument's paved surround.



Consider moving the monument to a more sensitive location. By tightening up this junction and widening the pavement on the Bridge Street/Station Road corner, it might be possible to move the monument to this location.

The Bridge

The medieval bridge is beautiful, and a Bakewell tourist attraction. Improving pedestrian access to the bridge would allow more people to admire its beauty and take in the lovely views from the top of the bridge. It was suggested that the bridge could be gently lit at night. However, a colony of bats is reported to live underneath the bridge, and lighting might disturb them, as well as creating light pollution.

Human interest

Of equal or perhaps greater importance to pedestrians is the aesthetic pleasure to be derived from the presence of others and human activity. Even in such varied surroundings, most people on foot can be seen deriving most pleasure from the presence of friends, neighbours and strangers. This sharing of space with strangers is central to our gregarious nature. We rejoice in the excitement of crowds – spend time in any busy town centre like Bakewell to experience this at first hand.

If the good habit of walking, already much in evidence in Bakewell town centre itself, can spread to more neighbouring streets and spaces, and local people can be encouraged to make more and longer journeys on foot, the aesthetic experience of walking in Bakewell will be transformed by the greatest attraction walkers can encounter – each other.

H) Traffic

Wherever you go in the centre of Bakewell, you are never far from problems created by the volume, speed and sheer size of traffic. This is particularly true on market days, when traffic can be relentless. In part, this report is intended to ensure that the many non-traffic related opportunities to improve Bakewell for people on foot are not overlooked due to an overemphasis on traffic issues. Traffic problems can be the hardest to overcome – but that doesn't mean that there are not practical steps that can be taken.

Traffic volume

Undertake detailed study of the heavy goods vehicles travelling through Bakewell – their purpose, their origin and destination, and their route – in order to ascertain whether all the HGV traffic which goes through Bakewell should be doing so. Some local auditors expressed concern that some HGVs were 'rat-running' in the routes which they took.

Traffic speed

One-way system: one way systems can help to reduce allocation of road space to vehicles. However, they can also encourage traffic to move faster – drivers are safe in the knowledge that they will not meet on-coming traffic. Bakewell is suffering from this effect (along Bridge Street and Anchor Square in particular), but without any of the benefits because carriageway width has not been narrowed.

Narrow carriageways and widen pavements around the Bakewell one-way system, including along Bridge Street.

The signage along Buxton Road/Matlock Street is large signage more suitable for dual carriageways. This encourages through-traffic to act as though it is travelling along a main road rather than through an ancient market town.

Replace the road signage with more appropriate signage.

White lines encourage traffic go faster, because it can be sure not to meet any on-coming traffic.

Consider removing white road markings along large sections of Bakewell, to help traffic to slow down.

20 miles per hour zone through-out the centre of Bakewell. This would stretch from the fire station along Buxton Road, to the garage along Matlock Street, to the junction with Station Road along Bridge Street.



The traffic signs through Bakewell are better suited to major dual carriageways than the centre of a market town

Recommendations

These recommendations offer a project-based approach to some key pedestrian issues in Bakewell, together with a number of tasks to deliver detail improvements that might more easily be made to the street environment

It may be that, for local people, certain key priorities have not been addressed here. Many more improvements, both major and minor, are included within the Main Findings section, under separate categories. Those improvements should not be considered as less important than the following recommendations – priorities for action should be determined by those who live and work in Bakewell themselves.

Data

1. Commission **detailed pedestrian flow counts** at a number of locations on and near Bridge Street, Matlock Street and Buxton Road, collate existing data on vehicle flows and numbers arriving in the area by public transport, and assess the commercial and social impact on the local economy by users of different modes, to support initiatives favouring more sustainable transport modes, including walking. Regular pedestrian flow counts will also provide a measure of the effectiveness of any changes implemented.
2. Commission **detailed research into the origin, destination and purpose of the large number of HGVs travelling through Bakewell**. Ascertain the reasons for the large number of lorries, in order to investigate either alternative routes or alternatives to the HGV trips.

Street Clutter

3. **Replace large traffic signs from the main streets in Bakewell**, and replace with smaller signs more in keeping with the historic nature of the town. .

Road Layout

4. Completely **re-design the Buxton Road/Matlock Street/Rutland Square junction**, to give more space for pedestrians, improve the crossings, and provide a more sympathetic setting for the war memorial
5. Create **gateways** to Bakewell town centre, at the fire station along Buxton Road, the far side of the bridge on Bridge Street, and by the petrol station along Matlock Street, to indicate a change in priority from traffic to people.
6. **Widen the pavements** along key sections of Bridge Street, by reducing the road space to a single carriageway.

Crossings

7. Install footway level crossings at all side entries along Bridge Street, Buxton Road and Matlock Street, to **create a pedestrian priority promenade** throughout the town centre.

Footways

8. Initiate a phased programme of **footway renovation along the main streets** to create inclusive, wheelchair-friendly access, paying special attention to side entry treatments and the removal of redundant street furniture.

Pedestrian facilities

9. Commission at least one **drinking fountain** for Bakewell town centre – possible in the small square near Water Lane, or on the corner of Bridge Street/Station Road. Drinking fountains promote good health by reducing the need to buy carbonated sugary drinks when one is thirsty.

Tom Franklin, August 2004