

Temporary Street Measures during the Coronavirus Crisis

1. The Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS) welcomes the measures that Transport Scotland and many local authorities are taking to encourage safe and sustainable travel during the coronavirus crisis. MACS wants to ensure that the mobility needs of disabled people are fully considered in the planning and delivery of such measures and has therefore produced this short Briefing Paper.
2. In terms of process, it is essential that the impacts on disabled people (including people who have difficulty walking, wheelchair users, people with cognitive impairments, including dementia, blind and deaf people) are considered. The requirements of the 2010 Equality Act still apply, but an equality impact assessment can be done quickly and with minimum bureaucracy, so long as it also takes into consideration the needs of disabled people.
3. It is essential to promote an awareness that many disabled people (who have limited mobility or sight for example) cannot easily avoid others to maintain social distancing. You should consult with local disabled people's organisations and/or local access panels.
4. In terms of specific measures, please consider:
 - many disabled people are more reliant on their cars and taxis than others. Appropriate provision must be made for parking, access etc.
 - safe space for pedestrians should be separate from cyclists.
 - pavements should be kept free of obstacles/clutter, including roadwork signs, bins, encroaching vegetation, etc which are a particular hazard for visually impaired people and constrain footways for everyone.
 - any areas separated off to provide extra walking or cycle space must take into account how disabled people can get on or off the pavement; this is especially important at bus stops.
 - barriers (for example used to delineate a temporary pavement from a traffic lane) should be detectable by a blind person using a long cane.
 - attention should be given to making sure enforcement (for example of traffic speed, parking/cycling on pavements) is effective.

David Hunter, Keith Robertson
Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland
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macs@gov.scot