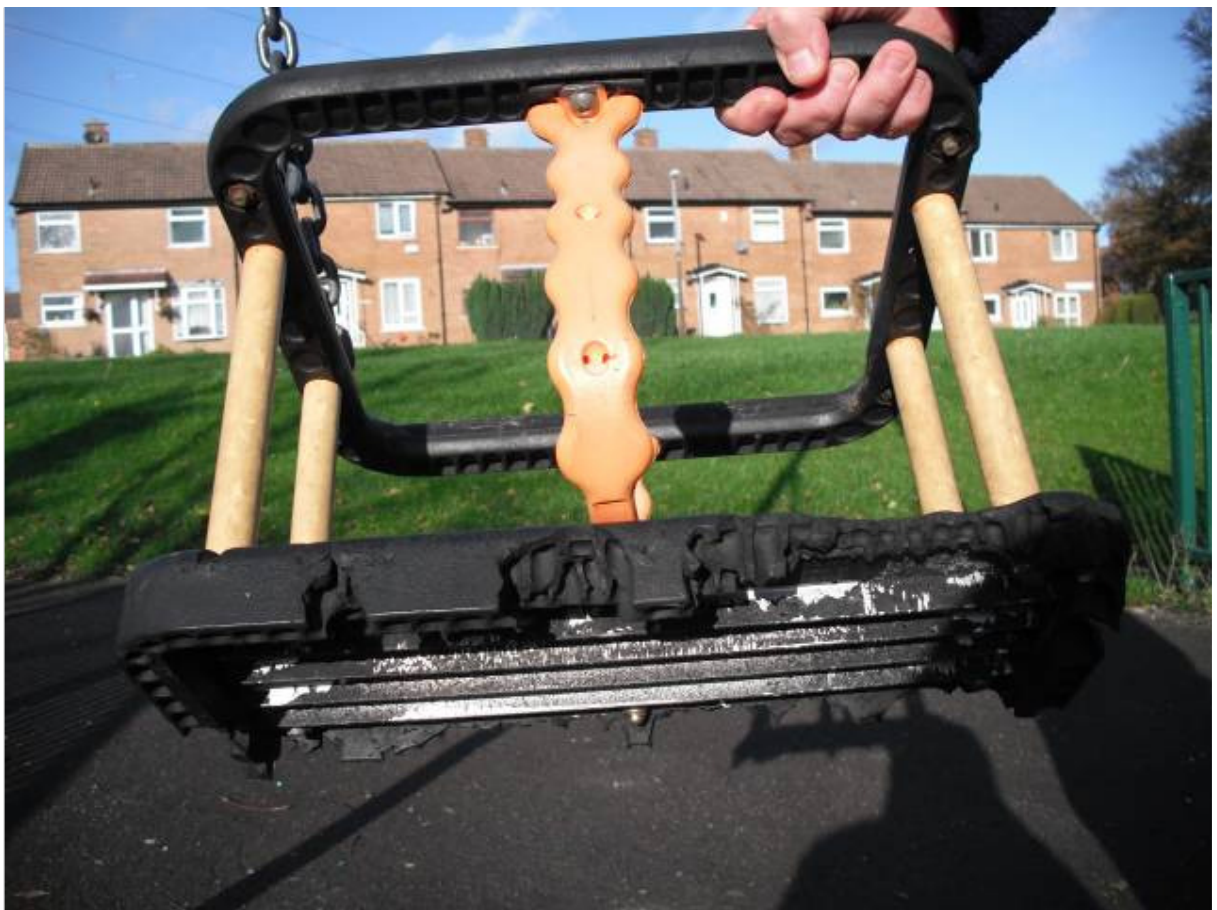


December 2009

# Lowedges Community Street Audit Report

A report of a Community Street Audit, 17 November 2009



**Living Streets** is the national charity that stands up for pedestrians. With our supporters we work to create safe, attractive and enjoyable streets, where people want to walk.



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# Living Streets

**Living Streets is the national charity that stands up for pedestrians. With our supporters we work to create safe, attractive and enjoyable streets, where people want to walk.**

We have been the national voice for pedestrians throughout our 80 year history. In the early years, our campaigning led to the introduction of the driving test, pedestrian crossings and 30mph speed limits. Since then our ambition has grown. Today we influence decision makers nationally and locally, run successful projects to encourage people to walk, and provide specialist consultancy services to help reduce congestion and carbon emissions, improve public health, and make sure every community can enjoy vibrant streets and public spaces.

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## Introduction

Living Streets is training local people to undertake Community Street Audits for the Living Neighbourhoods Project which is part of Sheffield City Council and NHS Sheffield's Let's Change for Life project.

Community Street Audits are a way to evaluate the quality of streets and spaces from the viewpoint of the people who use them, rather than those who manage them. This involves small groups of local residents, traders, councillors and officers to assess a route on foot, following which a report is produced with recommendations for improvements.

## Lowedges

Living Streets delivered a community street audit training session for local people in Lowedges on 17 November 2009. This report presents the key community assets and challenges identified by participants and the findings of the audits undertaken as part of the day. It is intended that this report will be shared within the community and with the council and other agencies. It is hoped that participants will share their learning by organising audits in other parts of the community with local people.

### Assets

The participants highlighted some of the key assets in the area:

- Green (Parks, trees, countryside)
- Walkable (Lovely to walk around)
- Community Spirit (More like a village, Lowedges Festival)
- Willingness to work together (TARA, Neighbourhood Watch, Terminus Initiative)
- Amenities (Café, Primary School, Church, Youth Club, Housing)

### Challenges

The participants highlighted some of the key challenges in the area:

- Reputation (Area not as bad as thought, has got better)
- Crime (Drugs, anti social behaviour – all ages not just young, underage drinking)
- Dull Appearance (Lack of trees and flowers)
- Maintenance of estate (Conditions of paths, Disabled Access)
- Dog fouling (Particularly in Park)
- Verge Parking (Particularly on Lowedges Road)
- Skate Park (Underused due to intimidation)
- Shops (Intimidating groups, drug users hang around waiting for prescriptions)



Training Participants

# Audit of Terminus Shops

The first audit began at the Terminus Initiative and looked at the parade of shops, the north side of Lowedges Road up to the boundary of the Grennel Mower, along Beckett Avenue to the play area and through the green space behind the shops as far as the Terminus Initiative.

The detailed observations and recommendations are included in a table at the end of this report.

The key problems highlighted by the audit are

- Quality of the shopping environment (disabled access, flytipping, lighting, graffiti)
- Crossing Lowedges Road (no formal crossing to south side and bus stop)
- Access to play area (lighting, litter, overhanging trees)

The key recommendations of the audit are

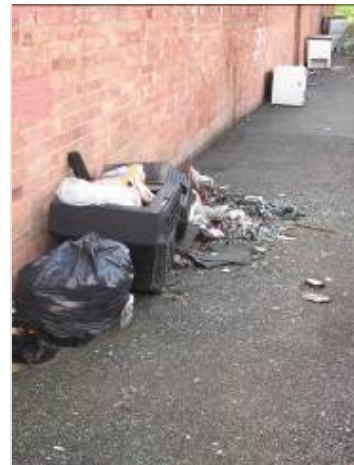
- Council, businesses, landlords and Sheffield Homes to clean up area
- Council to review crossings
- Sheffield Homes to consider improvements to access to play area as part of planned improvement



Terminus Shopping Parade



Beckett Avenue Playground



Behind Terminus Shops

# Audit of Lowedges Road and Boland Road

The audit began on the south side of Lowedges Road opposite the Terminus and included a loop around Boland Road.

The detailed observations and recommendations are included in a table at the end of this report.

The key problems highlighted by the audit are

- Quality of the street environment (Graffiti, footway condition, street furniture, weeds)
- Access to Bus Stop (Uneven paving, no handrails, dog fouling)
- Traffic Speed (Lowedges Road)

The key recommendations of the audit are

- Council and Sheffield Homes to clean up area
- Council and SYPTE to review access to bus stop
- Council and Police to review traffic speeds



Lowedges bus stop



Graffiti on Boland Road



Kerbs on Boland Road

## Audit of Path from Lowedges Road to Greenhill Park

The audit began on the south side of Lowedges Road opposite the Grennel Mower and followed the path south between Boland Road and Gresley Road, then east along the boundary of the golf course to Greenhill Park, where there is two sets of fences.

The detailed observations and recommendations are included in a table at the end of this report.

The key problems highlighted by the audit are

- Environmental quality  
(Footway condition, litter, verge parking, flooding)
- Lack of signs (good shortcut to park)
- Lighting

The key recommendations of the audit are

- Council and Golf Club to clean up area and investigate improvements along boundary
- Police and Sheffield Homes to control vehicles driving on grass verges
- Council and Friends of Greenhill Park to promote use of route



Tyre tracks across verge by Boland Road



Litter beside path



More flytipping by golf course

## Conclusion

The community street audits undertaken in Lowedges as part of the training session for local people have highlighted a number of issues, but also a range of opportunities for improvement some of which are potential quick wins such as maintenance and enforcement. Others such as improvements to the Shopping Parade and bus stops are more substantial, but may still be possible over time. There is the opportunity to learn from what has already been done in other areas, such as the Community Art project for the shop fronts in Jordanthorpe.

The training participants are keen to work together and perhaps form a local group to take forward the recommendations for this and other parts of Lowedges in partnership with the TARA, The Terminus Initiative and other local groups. The Community Assembly can help distribute the report to relevant departments and agencies as well as local councillors. It was good that the Police, Council and NHS Sheffield were represented at the training. Although Sheffield Homes were unable to attend they are a key partner for responding to a number of recommendations which relate to their estate.

As a next step it is suggested that the group produces an action plan, as there is the opportunity to bid for some funding for improvements in January 2010 that will promote physical activity as part of the Living Neighbourhoods Project. It is also hoped that training participants will also organise further audits with other members of the community. The middle shops on Lowedges Road were suggested as a possible next location.

## Notes of CSA of Terminus Shops

Location	Comments - Good and Bad	Recommendation for improvement (solutions)	Who?
<b>Shopping Parade East</b>	Graffiti on shop fronts	Ask shops to sign up to graffiti charter	Street Force
	Lack of lighting under private canopy	Investigate shop front improvement grant opportunities and opportunity for additional lighting on existing lighting columns (thru PFI?)	Regeneration/ Street Force
	Disabled parking bay is not large enough and no dropped kerb	Repaint parking bay and provide dropped kerb	Street Force
	Access ramp kerb is missing and bin needs reinstating	Replace bin and reinstate kerb	Street Force
	Dogs are tied to access ramp handrails, which obstructs it	Provide hitching post	Street Force
<b>Shopping Parade North</b>	Shutters make area uninviting when shop are closed	Consider community art project as at Jordanthorpe	Forum
	Rubbish on service access, fire exits obstructed, walls damaged, easy access to flat roof where there is trespassing	Remove obstructions, request building improvement, consider fencing off access path.	Sheffield Homes, NEET, Fire Service, Planning Enforcement
<b>Steps from Terminus Café to side of Co-op</b>	Congregating point for adults and young people, poorly lit and shutter box is low and could cause injury	Needs improving. Gating idea not supported as well used route to access shops	Street Force
	"someone tripped on steps and we had to call ambulance"	Investigate ramp access, improved lighting and shutter modification	Council
<b>Goods entrance to co-op</b>	Fly tipping in compound during co-op refurbishment	Building Control to contact co-op, suggest skips or containers	Building Control
<b>Ramp to 1st Floor of Terminus</b>	Hatch into void under ramp is broken so being used for fly tipping and risk of children getting in or fire. Drain blocked.	Contact Landlord and make hatch safe, clear drain.	Landlord, Fire Service

<b>Bus Stops on Lowedges Road</b>	Terminating no.53 buses drop passengers and stand opposite eastbound bus stop rather than at westbound stop. Suggested that bus can't layover at official westbound stop, but could at eastbound, but still issue of lack of crossing of Lowedges Road	Review bus stopping arrangements and crossing of Lowedges Road	SYPTE and Street Force
	Eastbound waiting area has been improved recently but is still dingy as has light fitting but no light	Provide lighting in seating area by eastbound stop	Sheffield Homes
	Westbound bus stop uneven paving "have gone flying"	Improve paving, remove outside tree pit and plant new one	Street Force
<b>Exit from car park onto Lowedges Road</b>	Cars parking on double yellows (maybe due to building works at co-op) can obstruct buses turning	Monitor and enforce parking	Parking control
	Dropped kerbs, but no tactiles as done on other junctions. Other residents report that tactiles are difficult with wheelchair	Consider tactiles	Street Force
<b>Jct of Beckett Ave (path) and Lowedges Road</b>	Steps on south side and no handrail, fast traffic	Investigate crossing to also serve bus stop, possible build out and ped ramp?	Street Force
<b>Beckett Ave (path) by Grennel Mower Pub</b>	Leaves on path and pub boundary by telephone box	Clear path and plant bulbs by phone box	Street Force
	Redundant fence posts, overhanging tree and litter by Old Betting Shop building, owned by brewery or leased by betting shop?	Check ownership and request tidy up and possible community use of building (furniture store for Terminus?)	Sheffield Homes/Planning
<b>Lowedges Play Area behind Grennel Mower Pub</b>	Secluded, but well used despite no lighting, broken glass, play equipment old and in poor condition, swing damaged (being used as training for bull terriers), redundant barriers, dog fouling, no bin by seat	Bid already in for improvement, but needs maintenance to make safe. Provide bin and new benches with backs. Investigate new lighting through PFI. Look at opportunity to improve access routes from pub car park. Dog warden to patrol.	Sheffield Homes/Brewery
<b>Atlantic Road Flats behind Co-op</b>	Fly tipping/dumping in garden	Enforce tenancy conditions and clear up	Sheffield Homes/Brewery

## Notes of CSA of Lowedges Road and Boland Road,

Location	Comments - Good and Bad	Recommendation for improvement (solutions)	Who?
<b>Lowedges Road, opposite Terminus nr jct Gresley Rd</b>	Ramp and Verge between footpath and carriageway uneven and covered in weeds and evidence of dog fouling	Weed area and clear dog mess. Re-pave verge.	Street Force
<b>Lowedges Road. Land adj 76 terminus bus shelter</b>	Uneven pathway and paving at rear of bus shelter. Steps to bus stop uneven, potential trip hazard. No hand rails for disabled access for bus users.	Re-pave path and paving area. Repair steps and provide hand rails and ramp to bus stop.	Street Force/SYPTE
	Wall by tree close to collapse due to tree roots.	Remove tree and stumps, replace wall and replant new tree	Street Force / Parks and Countryside?
<b>Lowedges Road jct Boland Road</b>	Crumbling kerb stones and pavement	Replace kerb stones and re-tarmac pavement.	Street Force
<b>Lowedges Road</b>	Complaint by member of public whilst conducting audit re: traffic speeding and putting pedestrians in danger	Introduction of possible traffic calming measures.	Street Force.
<b>o/s 16 Boland Road</b>	Crumbling kerb stones.	Replace / repair kerb stones.	Street Force.
<b>Rear of 263 Lowedges Rd (accessed via Boland Rd)</b>	Large area of weeds growing over windows.	Remove weeds and tidy grassed area.	Street Force.
<b>o/s 21 Boland Road</b>	Raised manhole cover and broken pathway - potential trip hazard	Re-align manhole cover and re-tarmac pavement	Street Force.
<b>o/s 29 Boland Road</b>	Graffiti on lamp post and uneven footpath.	Clean graffiti and re-tarmac pavement.	Street Force.
<b>Nr to gateway to golf course Boland Road</b>	Lamppost leaning badly. Reported by member of public as being hit repeatedly by bin wagon. Safety issue.	Repair and straighten lighting column	Street Force / Veolia

<b>Rear of 61 Boland Rd (opp 47)</b>	Broken footpath	Re-tarmac footpath	Street Force.
<b>Rear 59 Boland Road</b>	Rubbish piled on verge	Clear rubbish.	Street Force.
<b>Opp 28 Boland Road</b>	Broken kerbs, temp reinstatement in place.	Permanently replace broken kerb stones	Street Force
<b>O/s Maisonette block 75-85 Boland Rd</b>	Bags of Garden rubbish left to rot	Collect garden rubbish on allocated day.	Veolia
	Unightly flaking paint on railings and fascia board.	Repaint and tidy outside of flats area	Council
<b>O/s Housing block 87-99 Boland Rd</b>	Poor reinstatement of footpath	re-tarmac footpath	Street Force
<b>o/s 28 Boland Road</b>	Damaged footpath and weeds growing in path - potential trip hazard	re-tarmac footpath and clear weeds.	Street Force
<b>o/s 273 Lowedges Road</b>	Path between footway and road covered in weeds.	Clear weeds	Street Force
<b>o/s Grennel Mower PH</b>	Rubbish on grass	Clear Rubbish	Street Force/Grennel Mower?
<b>Lowedges Rd jct Gresley Rd</b>	Residents notice board in disrepair	Clean and repaint	Check Ownership

## Notes of CSA of Path from Lowedges Road to Greenhill Park

Location	Comments - Good and Bad	Recommendation for improvement (solutions)	Who?
<b>Section south of Lowedges Road</b>	Problems with litter and leaves across the whole of the path plus cracks in tarmac	Litter pick and mud/leaves needs clearing, re tarmac area	Street Force
<b>By south end of Boland Road</b>	People have driven their cars across the grass verges near the bottom of the path	Put 'grass protectors' onto verges. Talk to tenants about parking on driveways and roads only	Sheffield Homes/Police/PCSOs
<b>By Golf Course boundary</b>	Poor lighting and very secluded, unsure whether all the lights actually work	Current lights need to be tested and more lighting is needed	Street Force
	Some areas of the path are flooded with rain water and slippery	Better draining system needed	Street Force
	There is an area of wasteland between the fence next to the path and a second fence about 3metres further which is next to a golf course	Found out the land belongs to the Dore & Totley Golf Club and is private ground but has been neglected and potentially an unwanted expense for them to remove. Suggestion to contact golf club and ask them to clear the area or to hand it over to the council	Street Force/Golf Club
	In wasteland there is lots of rubbish, possibly syringes and it has become a tipping area for local residents- we saw a fridge, 2 chairs and other items	Suggestion to get the local schools and youth club to be involved with a council funded clear up programme of this area and to turn it into a nature area/walk for the local community. Also for police/PCSOs to contact local residents and warn them about tipping offences.	Street Force/police/local youth club & schools, park rangers
	The inner fencing by the path is broken and fallen down in parts- a "total disgrace"	Fencing needs to be fixed or removed as is dangerous and people can easily climb over it	Street Force/Sheffield Homes
	Dog fouling issue, no dog fouling bins nearby	Put in some dog fouling bins that are accessible to the local area	Street Force

<b>General</b>	No public footpath signs leading to this path- "residents don't know it even exists, it is a good short cut to the park and would make people more likely to visit the park".	Put in some public footpath signs	Street Force
	It is a handy path and a nice walk way down to the park, we saw birds, squirrels and enjoyed the walk	Promote the area better so more people use it and make the most of the natural nature attractions	Friends of Greenhill Park, Council, Sheffield Homes