

Thank You

We would like to extend our thanks to everyone who contributed to this important piece of work. Your time, insights and lived experiences have been invaluable in shaping the findings and action plan contained in this report.

A special thank you to:

Andrea White, Beverley Davis, Beverlie Seekings, Barry Roberts, Christine Mort, Dorothy Kaganowich, Brenda Naylor, Christine Newens, June Pope and Joan Carroll.



Who we are and What we do

Inspiring Communities Together started in 2011 with a small group of community members determined to make a lasting impact in Charlestown and Lower Kersal. Today, we're a Charitable Incorporated Organisation that works as a community anchor, supporting individuals to make positive changes in their lives. With space at the Innovation Forum and support from Salford City Council, we've built a foundation that allows us to deliver a wide range of programmes and initiatives across Salford and beyond, helping local people grow and making our neighbourhoods stronger for all.

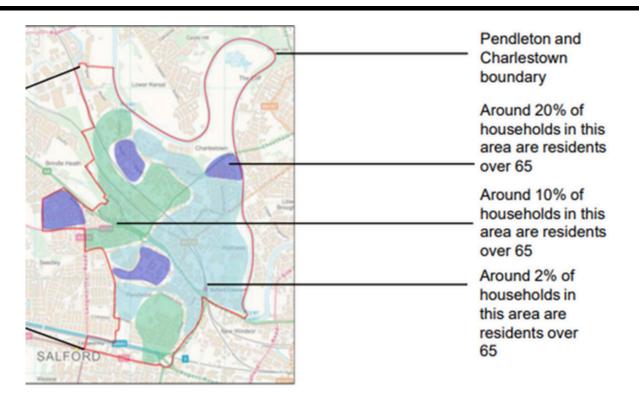
We are a key delivery partner in the Ageing in Place Pathfinder, a programme led by Greater Manchester Combined Authority to improve residents' quality of life as they grow older within neighbourhoods.

In Salford, the Pathfinder focuses on the neighbourhoods of Pendleton and Charlestown, where we have been working closely with local residents to understand their experiences, priorities, and aspirations. This report is a direct outcome of our work within the Pathfinder, reflecting the lived experiences of older people in these communities.

Alongside this, we are also the lead partner for Age Friendly Salford, a programme commissioned by Salford City Council to support residents to age well. Through this work, we continue to champion inclusive, supportive environments that help people remain active, connected and independent as they grow older.

The Greater Manchester Ageing in Place Pathfinder is working to make sure older people's voices are heard and valued in the places they live.

In Salford this work is delivered across the neighbourhoods of Charlestown and Pendleton.



Executive Summary

In August 2024, the project team conducted walking and wheeling audits using the Welsh Government's Walking Route Audit Tool (WRAT[1]). These audits were informed by earlier engagement activities and a visit to Wigan, where a similar audit had been successfully implemented. The audits involved older residents with diverse mobility and health needs and focused on routes frequently used to access essential services and community spaces.

While we anticipated that issues would emerge around transportation and outdoor spaces, given the physical and environmental challenges already raised by residents, we also uncovered important insights related to respect and social inclusion. These findings highlight the significance of how older people feel they are perceived and valued within their community and the impact this has on their sense of belonging and wellbeing.

Key Findings

Transportation

- Public transport access is inconsistent, with long wait times and poor reliability on some routes.
- Removal of seating at bus stops and poor customer service from some drivers negatively impact older users.
- Ring and Ride services were reported as unreliable.
- Positive feedback was given to Stagecoach drivers who met Age Friendly Standards.

I can't walk far, even with my walker and I get nervous when out and about, especially when the ground is uneven. I won't give up, I've got to keep going, otherwise I'll end up in my flat all day, every day

Respect & Social Inclusion

- Residents expressed feelings of vulnerability due to visible drug activity, antisocial behaviour and a lack of police presence.
- Removal of community benches and play areas, intended to deter crime, has reduced opportunities for social interaction and rest.
- Some residents felt forced to choose between isolation and risking unsafe environments.



I don't think some drivers understand what older people need when they use buses. Some drivers have refused to pull up to the platform or have moved off before I've had the chance to sit down.

Outdoor Spaces & Buildings

- Widespread issues with uneven pavements, blocked drains and overgrown vegetation.
- Lack of resting benches and poor maintenance of pedestrian crossings.
- Safety concerns due to fast traffic, poor visibility and inadequate pedestrian infrastructure.
- Accessibility issues at some housing schemes and community facilities due to unadopted or poorly maintained land.



You either push yourself to go out even though you feel unsafe or live a lonely, isolated existence.



In late 2024 and early 2025, residents were invited to review the audit findings and help prioritise the issues identified. This collaborative process led to the development of a clear action plan, with early successes already being seen and further outcomes anticipated as local partners respond.

Active Travel Act guidance: walking and cycling route audit tools (appendix H) | GOV.WALES

Background

The Ageing in Place Pathfinder is about listening to and valuing older people's voices in Pendleton and Charlestown to improve their quality of life, asking these simple questions:

- · What is it like to live around here?
- · What could make it better?
- · How can we work together?

These conversations have been closely aligned with the World Health Organisation's (WHO) eight domains for Age-Friendly Communities, helping us to shape a more inclusive and supportive environment for older residents. <u>Creating age-friendly cities and communities</u>

Housing	Transportation (and Motability)	Social participation	Outdoor spaces and buildings
Community support and health services	Communication and information	Respect and social inclusion	Civil participation and employment

During late 2023 and early 2024, we started consulting with older people in Pendleton and Charlestown using a variety of methods including a neighbourhood questionnaire, a community audit and engagement sessions which enabled us to begin to focus on their priorities and aspirations.

Issues around transport and mobility, as well as the quality and accessibility of outdoor spaces and buildings were consistently raised by older residents as key concerns. Many participants shared challenges related to getting around the neighbourhood safely and comfortably, whether due to limited public transport options, poorly maintained pavements or difficulties accessing local amenities and buildings. Following an Ageing in Place Pathfinder visit to Wigan in March 2024 and learning about the walking and wheeling audit they had completed, a decision was made in collaboration with our Partnership Board to undertake a more detailed walking and wheeling audit across our neighbourhood to better understand and address these issues.

The Project

We collaborated with local organisations, services and housing providers to promote the Walking & Wheeling Project to residents aged 60 and over. A workshop held at Pendleton Gateway in July 2024 attracted 10 residents, including some who had not previously engaged with the Ageing in Place pathfinder project. Based on their feedback, five key walking routes were selected for further assessment.

Seven older residents with varying health and mobility needs participated in five walking audits across Pendleton and Charlestown. In August 2024, we conducted Walking and Wheeling Audits using the Walking Route Audit Tool (WRAT[1]). These audits assessed the condition and suitability of walking routes that connect older people to essential services and community assets such as shops, cafés, green spaces, community venues, and transport links

Why Walking Audits Matter

The benefits of walking audits:

- Supports older people to be heard and influence change (e.g. increasing time at pedestrian crossing, state of pavements, drop kerbs)
- Improves the outdoor environment for everyone to use (mobility issues, those with pushchairs, sensory impairments)
- Raises awareness with and between planners and developers to create change through trusted relationships

According to 2023 road traffic data in Salford, 29% of pedestrian-related incidents involved individuals aged over 56, highlighting the urgency of addressing safety and accessibility.

Crime Statistics:



In the year ending September 2023,

Salford recorded 12,370

12,370 incidents per 100,000 people

higher than the Greater Manchester average

Resident-Led Audits: Key Findings

Recurring issues included:

- Raised, loose and uneven pavements.
- · Lack of /removal of benches.
- Overgrown vegetation obscuring visibility and increasing perceived risk of crime.
- Cars blocking dropped kerbs, forcing longer, more exhausting detours.
- E-scooters left outside designated bays, creating trip hazards.

Despite these challenges, participants noted some positives: low levels of vandalism, minimal litter, and generally low traffic noise and pollution.

Transportation

Note: These insights were gathered in September 2024, prior to the rollout of the Bee Network in Salford.

Older residents shared a range of concerns about public transport access and reliability:

- <u>Bus Stops and Routes:</u> The removal of seating at bus stops to deter antisocial behaviour has unintentionally disadvantaged older people, particularly those with mobility issues, making them less likely to use public transport.
- <u>Ring and Ride Services:</u> Many reported issues with punctuality and reliability, reducing confidence in this service.
- <u>Service Inconsistency</u>: Some routes were described as unreliable, with buses arriving far less frequently than scheduled.
- <u>Accessibility</u>: Access to public transport varied significantly depending on where residents lived.



It's getting harder and harder for people like me to get around. They took away the benches at the bus stops, so now I have to stand and wait, which isn't easy with my knees



Customer Experience also varied, some residents reported poor treatment, including drivers refusing to lower ramps for wheelchair users and dismissive attitudes. In contrast, some Stagecoach drivers were praised for their courteous and supportive service and had earned recognition under the Age Friendly Salford standards.

Onboard Behaviour was another concern. Priority seating was often occupied by younger passengers who did not offer their seats. Large backpacks carried by students were seen as hazardous, with one resident reporting being struck in the face.

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Older residents highlighted several environmental and accessibility challenges:

<u>Parking:</u> At Heraldic Court, the relocation of the car park outside the grounds has made parking difficult for residents with respiratory or physical health issues.

<u>Walkways:</u> High kerbs, broken pavements, and blocked drains were common, leading to flooding and trip hazards.

<u>Green Spaces</u>: While residents were aware of local green areas, many were unsure of their accessibility or age-friendliness. There was interest in further audits to explore these spaces.



The pavements are cracked and when it rains, the drains overflow, it's a real problem to get about safely



Road Safety was a recurring theme. Speeding and aggressive driving were frequently reported, especially on roads leading to industrial areas. A lack of official crossings forced those with limited mobility to take longer, less safe routes. Parking on pavements was a major issue, particularly for those using mobility aids.



Inconsiderate drivers make me anxious when I'm crossing to get to shopping centre



Access Issues:

A sheltered housing scheme had a pickup/drop-off point on unadopted land with uneven paving and potholes, making it unsafe and difficult to access. Despite raising concerns, residents were told no alternative access would be provided.

Respect and Social Inclusion

While some residents felt safe in their neighbourhoods, others, particularly those near the central shopping centre—reported feeling unsafe and intimidated due to:

- <u>Antisocial Behaviour and Public Space:</u> Benches and a small play area were removed due
 to misuse by drug dealers. However, these spaces were not replaced, leaving older people
 without resting spots and children without safe play areas.
- <u>Visible Drug Activity:</u> Open drug dealing and reports of stabbings were common, with residents expressing frustration over the lack of police presence and perceived inaction by the local authority.
- <u>Fear and Isolation</u>: Many felt forced to choose between staying indoors or risking unsafe environments. Fear of reprisals prevented residents from challenging antisocial behaviour





Next Steps

In October 2024, we invited residents to a follow-up session to present the findings from the walking and wheeling audits and to discuss potential next steps. The session focused on identifying the appropriate organisations and teams that could help address the issues raised. A representative from Salford City Council attended and provided valuable insight into the structure and functions of various council departments, helping residents understand how changes could be implemented. However, for some of the issues raised, it was unclear who owns or is responsible for the land in question, which may delay or complicate the process of implementing solutions.

In March 2025, we reconvened with residents to prioritise the identified issues, ranking them as urgent, high and medium priority (see Appendix B). This collaborative process enabled us to develop a clear and focused action plan. In May 2025, the prioritised issues were formally shared with the relevant contact at Salford City Council, and we received a response within days. All issues have now been reported to the appropriate teams and we are currently awaiting updates on potential outcomes.

Following ongoing discussions with stakeholders attending our Partnership Board meetings, we are pleased to highlight three successful outcomes:

1. In May 2025, repair work was carried out on a dropped kerb at Sinners Quarter, off Liverpool Street. This issue was originally raised by a participant in the Walk & Wheel audit, who highlighted the need for a dropped kerb to allow direct and accessible access to the local community centre on Langworthy Road. The repair was reported to us by the individual shown in the image below





2. The Youth Zone, a newly built venue, is located along a passageway between Almond Close and Belvedere Road. This passage had previously been identified as problematic due to issues with litter, fly-tipping and general neglect. In March, the building contractors for the Youth Zone took action to clean the area and repaint the railings, significantly improving its appearance and safety. The contractors will continue to maintain the passage until March 2026. After that, Youth Zone staff plan to launch community initiatives, such as litter-picking projects involving local young people to help maintain the improvements.

3. In early conversations with residents of Charlestown and Pendleton, community safety was a major concern, especially in areas like the Broadwalk and Salford Precinct, where many felt unsafe and intimidated. Residents expressed a strong desire to reconnect with local police.

Following a change in the neighbourhood's PCSO due to police restructuring exercise, it took time to re-establish contact. Once in place, the new PCSO supported our Cuppa with a Copper initiative, launched in November 2024. These monthly sessions have helped rebuild trust, improve communication, and reassure older residents, who now feel more supported and hopeful about safety in their area.



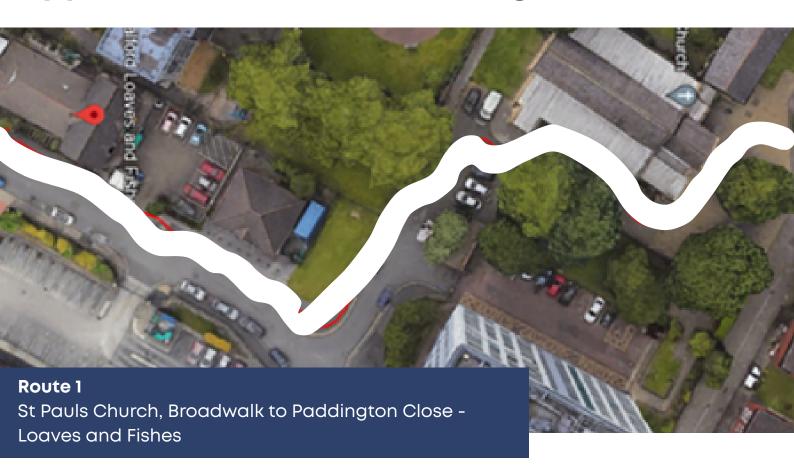
Conclusion

The Walking and Wheeling Community Audit has provided a vital platform for older residents in Charlestown and Pendleton to share their lived experiences; highlight the challenges they face and contribute to shaping a more age-friendly neighbourhood. Through a collaborative and inclusive process, we have identified key issues across transportation, outdoor spaces and social inclusion, areas that significantly impact the ability of older people to live independently, safely and with dignity.

This report reflects not only the barriers that exist but also the strength of community voice and the potential for positive change when residents, local organisations and statutory partners work together. The prioritisation of issues and development of an action plan mark an important step forward and we are encouraged by the early responses and engagement from Salford City Council, Greater Manchester Police and the Youth Zone.

While some challenges, such as unclear land ownership and long-standing infrastructure issues may take time to resolve, the commitment shown by residents and partners alike demonstrates a shared determination to make Charlestown and Pendleton safer, more accessible and more inclusive for everyone

Appendix A: Assessed Walking Routes

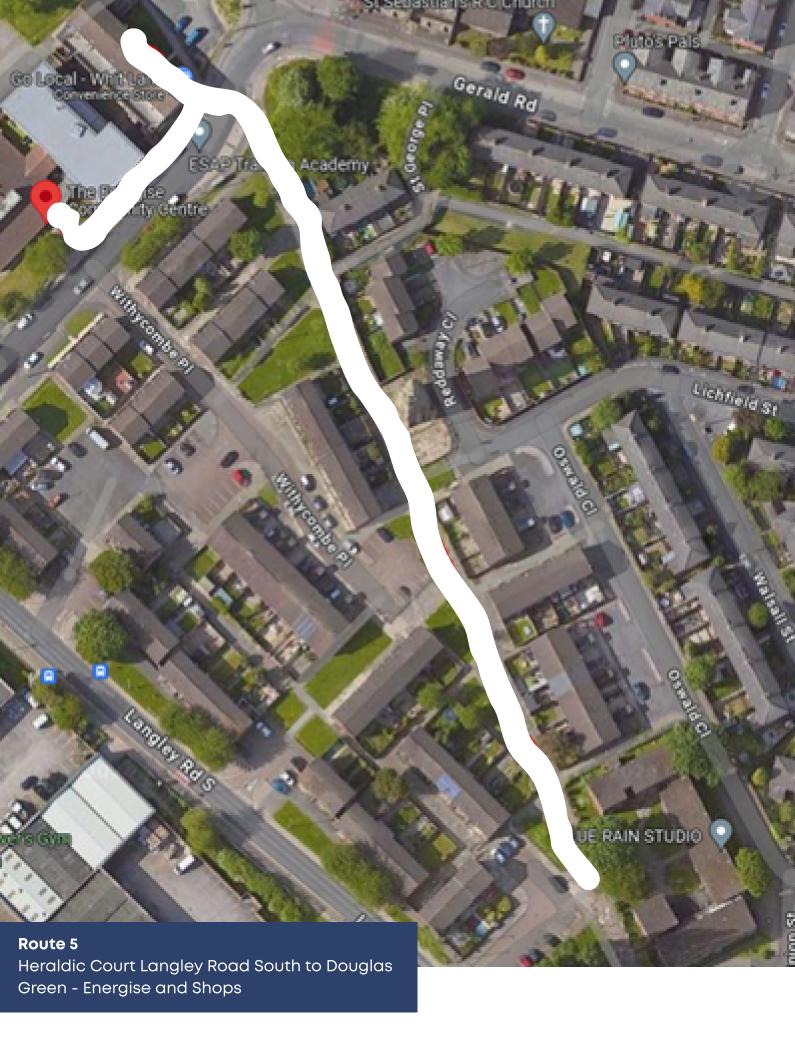








Langworthy Road – Langworthy Cornerstone



Appendix B: Full List of Issues Identified

Urgent			
Issues	Location		
Green scooter parking bay, obstructing pavement corner of Paddington & Churchill Way.	Paddington Close M6 5PL corner of Churchill Way M6 5QX		
Uneven pavements along the whole of the Broadwalk	Broadwalk M6 5FX		
Uneven, loose, trenching, causing flooding and dangerous underfoot along Langley Road, past Aspire	St Georges Way M6 6SU		
Uneven pavements and raised and blocked water grid. Raised UU water grid outside the hairdressers	Kemsing Walk M5 5LS		
Trenching, uneven, cracked, patched with tarmac pavements along whole of route	All along St Georges Way		
Uneven pavements	Paddington Close M6 5PL		
High			
Issues	Location		
Crossing on Churchill Way is an island only, no official means to cross. Crossing has a steep decline on pathway	Churchill Way M6 5QX		
Grids raised and blocked, trip hazard and flooding alone the Broadwalk	Broadwalk M6 5FX		
High levels of traffic, noise and pollution along Langley Road, from industrial area	Langley Road South M6 6SP		
Crossing at Liverpool Street, Kemsing Way, no dropped kerb, gradient high	Kemsing Walk M5 5LS		
Chevrons limit number of people passing between if using pushchairs, mobility scooters / aids etc.	On St Georges Way 2 sets of Chevrons 1st near to Heraldic Court 2nd bottom past St George's spire		
Medium			
Issues	Location		
As Churchill Way is wide, traffic coming both ways is fast	Churchill Way M6 5QX		
No tactile kerb on corner of Almond Close and Belverdere Road	Almond Close M6 8AT		
Pedestrian Crossing - 14 seconds to cross, older people needed longer	Cromwell Road M6 6DA		
Crossing at Liverpool Street, Kemsing Way, pooling issues	Kemsing Walk M5 5LS		
Poor visibility on the corner or Douglas Green, when getting to health centre or shops	Bottom of St Georges Way, Douglas Green and Gerald Road		











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