

I do like to be beside the seaside

Creating a safer, more accessible and welcoming place for people with dementia to walk

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Project Aim

The aim of the project was to make Prestwick promenade a safer, more accessible and welcoming space to walk for people living with dementia.

Project Methods

Paths for All (PFA) worked in partnership with volunteers from Dementia Friendly Prestwick (DFP).

DFP had identified a number of changes they wanted to make through their regular dementia friendly health walk that meets on the promenade.

A steering group was established to oversee the project which included local agencies South Ayrshire Council, Ayrshire Roads Alliance, as well as PFA and DFP.

The changes encompassed a number of improvements to the site and a consultation was carried out to demonstrate community buy-in for the project, which led to support from South Ayrshire Council and Ayrshire Roads Alliance for the project.

DFP consulted directly with people living with dementia, the wider community and also carried out an online survey. DFP used the results of the consultation to prioritise improvements and allocate funding accordingly.

This work was funded with support from Paths for All's Community Paths grant and Dementia Friendly Walking project, Dementia Friendly Prestwick, South Ayrshire Council and Sustrans ArtRoots.

The improvements were launched on World Alzheimer's Day, September 2020.

Project Outputs

The following changes have been made to the promenade:



14 new benches to provide rest points. The bright colours provide contrast with the ground helping people with sight loss or sensory challenges associated with some types of dementia.



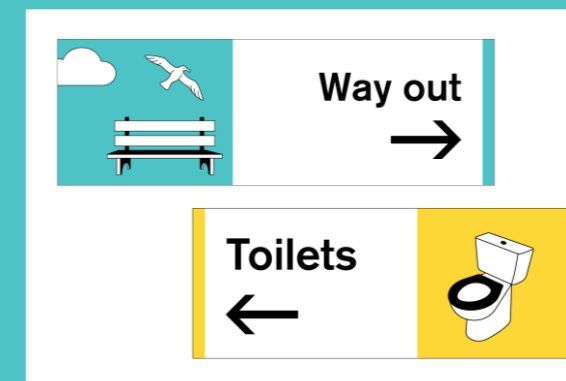
Pedestrian refuge and double yellow lines increase road safety. Pedestrians can stop and rest midway and with no parked cars sight lines are improved.



A fingerpost directing visitors to the promenade to key facilities and attractions. The design of the symbols and sign follows best practice in dementia friendly design.



The group worked with PFA artist in residence Alec Finlay to create a public art project. 3 wind-vane poems were installed along the prom, created with the dementia friendly walking group.



External and internal signage for the public toilets. The symbols are site specific and follow best practice in dementia friendly design, high contrast and easily interpreted.



Production of a series of films promoting the changes to the prom and learning. This included interviews, drone footage and photography.

Conclusions

- A dementia friendly environment begins by speaking with people living with dementia to understand their experiences and builds from there
- Voluntary groups can be positive, sustainable agents of change bringing a wealth of experience and knowledge of their communities
- Engage with local authorities to support practicalities of implementation
- Consultation is key to getting things right, even better to go beyond the target audience to ensure wider community buy-in
- The arts can be an effective tool for engagement, creating a unique space for discussion in an inclusive way