

# **'Easier Access for Residents'**

## **using wheelchairs, pushchairs and mobility scooters**

**Access to the town centre** by wheelchair, mobility scooter and pushchairs- many forced off the pavement- **can be very difficult.**

**Several causes** regrettably- ignoring potholes and the state of pavements:

Overgrown hedges

Lack of (and inconsistency of provision of) drop kerbs.

Paucity of pedestrian crossings.

Barriers (bicycle) now obsolete and difficult to manoeuvre round

Cars parked on pavement so as to allow no access whatsoever

### **Action**

A survey has been carried out on a sample basis (from East Thame) to identify specific obstacles that prevent access by a limited number of routes to and around the Town centre. The aim is to attempt to remove all major obstacles by providing an integrated approach rather than concentrating just on individual obstacles.

Evidence has been gathered and collated in list and photographic form. The data was gathered with the voluntary help of local residents and wheelchair users to demonstrate the obstacles faced by those using wheelchairs, mobility scooters and pushchairs or those unsteady on their feet. These documents together with a map have been provided to the OCC Highways Officer following a meeting arranged by the Acting Town Clerk.

At the moment any ideas are still at the assessment and research stage. I was asked to bring the issue to the Full Council at the June P&E meeting. On reflection, and having discussed the matter further, it became clearly important to determine, on a trial basis, whether the provision of integrated routes, with major obstacles removed, is tenable under existing working practices (and at no or little cost) before proffering it as a solution. Positive discussions have taken place with the Highways Officer but an integrated approach requires cooperation between more senior responsibilities. It is, therefore, best to await feedback before deciding whether a solution can be put forward for consideration or whether we have to adopt a different approach.

### **Purpose of this note**

To inform councillors of this activity and the need for action. Depending on the results of this trial a proposal may be brought forward to this council to extend coverage to the whole of Thame.

Bob Austin