Mobility problems are one of the issues that trigger day-to-day comments from residents and where everybody has an opinion. Typically, few citizens make the effort to try to change things. However, it can be done and, with some perseverance, it does work! In Szentendre, Hungary, a local intersection was made safer in this way.

**Background & Objectives**

Szentendre is a medium-sized town of about 15,000 residents north of Budapest. It has all the typical mobility problems of most European towns, most importantly the adverse effects of ever-growing traffic levels. In this particular case study the example used is an intersection, which draws significant traffic due to a pharmacy, shop, fitness centre, and block of flats.

Although in Szentendre local traffic regulations forbid parking within 5 metres of a street corner, this rule is regularly broken, primarily due to customers of the pharmacy “popping in for 5 minutes”.
The result: a busy local intersection, with numerous accidents and regular conflicts between various road users.

**Implementation**

When there is a local problem citizens should not wait for the local authority to organise a public hearing or any other process of public involvement. Most likely this will not happen anyway and, most importantly, the local government may not even know that a problem exists. In this situation, one of the nearby residents took the initiative and first consulted the staff of the pharmacy. They reluctantly agreed that there was a problem and that accidents were caused by their customers. However, they were not very motivated to take action.

As a second step, in 2009 and then later in 2011, letters were sent to the Infrastructure Department of the Local Authority. These called for a variety of solutions ranging from law enforcement to a traffic mirror and speed bumps. There was no reply to the first letter from the Authority, although the second letter (originally drafted because of another local infrastructure problem) did generate a response.

In this message the Authority did not support the idea of speed bumps and mirrors, because it was considered unsafe, and law enforcement was not considered to be a practicable solution either. However, the Authority did promise that a committee would look into the problem.

**Conclusions**

In May 2012 yellow stripes appeared on the road surface of the intersection, clearly forbidding parking in that area. In the one month since the implementation of this measure it is too early to say whether it has made a significant difference to the parking problem and ‘micro-congestion’. However, the first results do look promising and, most importantly, the cooperative process between residents and the local authority did bring about results.

The most important lesson of this case is that citizens should not stop at complaining to friends and family. Taking action and writing to the local authority can make a difference! In this respect, perseverance is important. The second letter was actually an answer to a public letter from the local authority and in that case it did generate response. It is also good to consult and bring on board all the parties that can help, in this case a ‘house representative’ of the nearby block of flats, who was copied in to the second letter.

**Keywords**

MM for residential sites
inclusive design
stakeholder involvement