

## Summary of accessibility in Ligatne nature and culture trails

Observations have been realized during the seminar for accessibility in tourism attractions in Ligatne on 28:th of August 2014. Seminar was organized by Vidzeme Planning Region and the Municipality of Ligatne. Seminar included presentations and practical "accessibility walk" through the trails in the afternoon by the seminar participants. Seminar gathered about 50 participants.

Main observations have been described below in two categories as follows;

Successful solutions (+)

Proposed to be developed (-)

### Successful solutions and matters

- + Well prepared basic guidance and maps of the village and routes
- + Clear starting point (information house) for the information, material and for planning of individual explore in the village
- + Well done and durable wooden structures (bridges, stairs, landings, benches etc.) during the route
- + Alternative routes for walkers and wheelchair users both with parents with baby strollers
- + Attention has been regarded to the color contrast of the stairs and avoiding of the slippery by surfaces of the routes and ramps
- + Brilliant atmosphere and really beautiful nature (aromas and sounds also to be sensed for example by the persons with visual impairs)
- + Pleasant and respective attitude of the staff in service and in development

Proposed to be developed

- Preparations in information house (both-sided handrails for the ramp and stairs, turning direction of the front-door, horizontal handle adjusted inside of the door in accessible toilet)
- Preparation of walkways (surface) in some places of the route
- Preparation of the ramps in some landings of vantages (width as the same as the landings, lengthened handrails, avoiding of sharp ends of the handrails)
- Bridge near by the factory; surface of the path (compressed stone ash) avoiding the level differences and slippery by the walkway and lengthened handrails of the bridge to the existing metal poles
- Movable shelter timber in the bridge near to the dam (currently missing)

- Location of information boards and maps in some places (for example in the parking place near by the seminar hall and information point) shall be adjusted in more comfortable places and also added with raised text for visually impaired or weak-sighted people)
- Alternative routes for walkers and wheelchair users shall be guided separately (for example signs and guidance in the maps with separate color)
- Benches for the rest shall be added in some places of the route (for example in the middle of the long stairs up to the hill)
- Accessible toilet located for example in the top of the hill near by the handcraft workshop in the middle of the route
- Entrance of the seminar hall (straight ramp from walkway to the entrance equipped with steely both-sided handrails shall be recommended)

Detailed feedback and proposals were given and recorded in the common discussion of the seminar and during the tour on previous evening with the staff of Ligatne municipality. If there will be any additional questions related to the observations or proposed solutions please do not hesitate to ask and contact us.

As a summary of the visit and meeting with the persons in charge of Ligatne municipality shall be noticed that the tourism attraction in Ligatne village describing the history and nature of the area is very unique and impressive. Guidance service and routes are also very comfortable for elderly visitors. For people moving for example with wheelchair or other devices there will be certain challenges based mainly on the structure of landscape. This shall be also mentioned in marketing of the attraction. By honest information about the possibilities and challenges shall be avoided possible disappointments which will be met during the visit. Concerning to the possibilities for accommodation there is the rehabilitation center near by the village and it will offer without a doubt accessible accommodation services for customers with special needs. Special motored vehicles borrowed from the information house may be one helpful benefit enabling movement and visits even in the most challenging places during the route.

Timo Ekroos, ISAK-Coordinator  
Karelia University of Applied Sciences  
Centre for Innovations for Independent Living ISAK  
FINLAND  
+ 358 40 510 1241  
[timo.ekroos@karelia.fi](mailto:timo.ekroos@karelia.fi)