

Project: „Lifestyles revisited ...”



Workshop:

**„ Access for blind and partially sighted people to the
outdoor heritage sites in Royal Route in Krakow”**

December 2012

The Royal Route is the most frequently visited tourist route in Krakow.

The aim of this workshop has been to examine access for blind and partially sighted people to outdoor heritage sites among The Royal Route in Krakow



This Royal Route is accessible to the disabled, blind and visually impaired. Twelve bronze statues were placed along Krakow's Royal Route (the most popular walking route in the city), depicting the key historical sites.

Models of landmarks for visually impaired are described in Braille in Polish and English languages.

Alongside the Route has been dispatched 12 models the most important elements of the built heritage between Barbican and Wawel:

- 9 models on pedestals

- 3 hanging models.

With three exceptions, they are set on stone plinths 85 to 90 cm high, allowing wheelchair access.

Blind Assistance Foundation examined access for blind and partially sighted people to outdoor heritage sites among The Royal Route . Our visually impaired volunteers prepared some comments related to sightseeing.

Royal Route is starting from

1.Barbican

Royal Barbican is one of three European defensive buildings which have survived to our times in almost intact condition.

The first model is presenting the Barbican and the best preserved fragment of the defence wall.

Approaching the model from the side of the Barbican, we find **the text in Braille** on the oblique surface surrounding the model. The text in Polish is separated from the English (on the right) with the coat-of-arms of the city of Kraków.

Comments: Heavily damaged pavement. Not adjusted walkway (no audio signal, no special tactile paving in the end of a pavement). Model is hard to locate.



2. St. Florian's Gate

St. Florian's Gate has been built at the beginning of 14 century, its name comes from St. Florian and this is why a bas-relief representing St. Florian decorates the gate.

At St. Florian's Gate from the side of the city is located a **model** which represents Old Town with marked Royal Route and most important landmarks.

Comments:

The route is save, the street is flat. Maquette is hard to locate.



3. Town Arsenal

4. Jan Matejko's on his house on Florianska Street

Now we are going back to Florianska Street, which is a part of Royal Route and on which there is Jan Matejko House. **It is decorated with another model.**

The model is a bas-relief of Jan Matejko's face and it is placed on his house on Florianska Street 41. This is a house in which was born, lived and died the most distinguished representative of Polish historical painting- Jan Matejko (1838-1893), has been turned into a museum just a few years after his death.

Comments: Flat relief of Jan Matejko- very impressive.

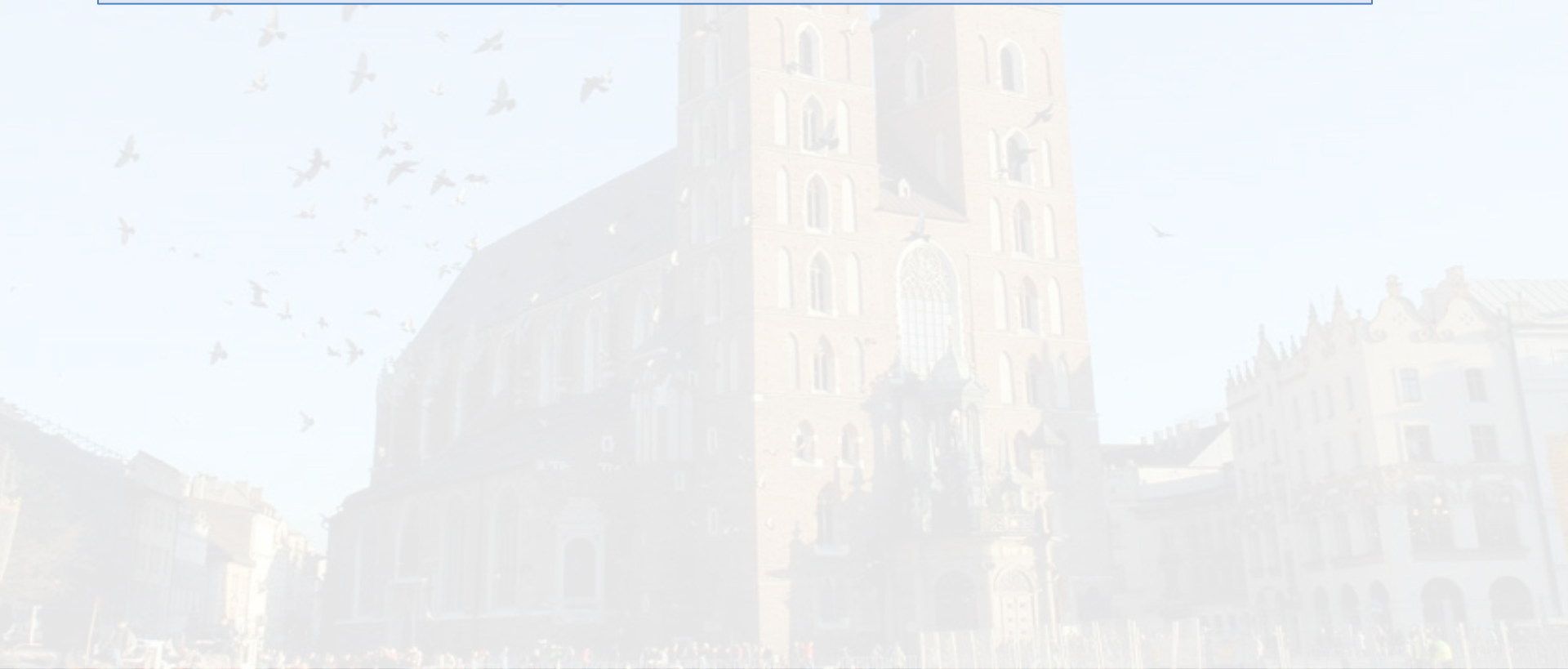


5. Main Market Square

From Florianska Street we enter the Main Market Square.

The main market square has been laid out in 1257 when the town received the City Charter. It's the largest main market square in Europe.

A model of the old city presents the part of Krakow that used to be surrounded with defence walls and Wawel.



6. Basilica of St. Mary's

Frontage of the Basilica is decorated with two towers of different height, one of them is called hejnalica because from it "hejnał" hourly bugle-call is played, another one is called ecclesial. Every day at 12 o'clock hourly bugle-call is played and transmitted all over the Poland.

Model of basilica is placed at St. Mary's Square.

*Comments: Destroyed flagstone.
Maquette is quite far from Basilica*



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Comments: Destroyed stone Maquette is quite far from the Basilica



7. Cloth Hall (Sukiennice)

Cloth Hall (Sukiennice) model is located from the side of St. John Street.

Modern day Cloth Hall has two rows of stalls, mainly with jewellery, souvenirs and handcraft. Underground the Main Market Square there is a modern museum.

Comments: Flat stone. Corridors of the Cloth Hall are dimly lit.



8. Adam Mickiewicz monument

On the left side of cloth hall there is Adam Mickiewicz monument commonly referred to by Cracowians as "Adaś". Its unveiling took place in 1898 hence on the hundredth anniversary of Adam Mickiewicz's birth.

Comments: Big benches, flat stone. No maquette of the monument.

9. St. Wojciech's church

A little St. Wojciech's church, patron of Poland, one of the oldest churches in Cracow which primarily had been a Romanesque church, then gothic, renaissance and baroque. Supposedly, according to tradition St. Wojciech preached at that place.

10. Town Hall Tower

On the right side of the cloth hall, from the opposite side of the market thus far described is the town hall of which only Town Hall Tower had been preserved. It is a 70 meter gothic tower from 14th century. Town hall had been Cracow's main administrative building and was quite distinguishable by its silhouette: a tall tower with a marvellous clock. In its dungeons there was a torture chamber and a granary.

11. The university

After watching the town hall tower, St Anna's street leads us to the oldest building of Jagiellonian University, to a very beautiful Collegium Maius. Around Collegium Maius other buildings of the university were constructed. The university had been founded in 1364, but it was not until 1400 that it was renovated by the royal couple Jadwiga Andegaweńska and Władysław Jagiełło.

12. Planty

Planty is a park established on the site of former defensive walls. By coming back along Planty to Grodzka Street, we pass The Archbishop's Palace with so called. „Pope's window”. Poles, especially Cracowians share sentiment for that place because during John Paul II pilgrimages, he dwelled and addressed from that place prior to becoming Pope.

Comments: Lack of separate paths for cyclists. The number of holes in the pavement, benches are too close to the pavement-person walking with a white cane will strike sitting people's legs

13. Grodzka Street

On the left side of Grodzka Street there is Dominican Church, and on the right Franciscan Church. At the entrance to the Franciscan basilica, from the „Pope’s window” there is **a model of Franciscan monastery**. The church has beautiful stained glasses made by a painter, poet, and playwright Stanislaw Wyspianski. This model presents an extensive complex of the Franciscan Order.

We can find Braille descriptions separated by the coat-of-arms of Kraków. Over the description in Polish, we find the place where the model is situated, to the right of the main entrance to the church.

Comments: Dangerous access to the model (rugged pavement) and to the main entrance of the church (lack of a few paving stones).



14. Wyspianski's Pavilion

One of them titled „God the Father” has been developed for the blind as **next model** and is located in a building called the Wyspianski's Pavilion. The building is located at the corner of Grodzka Street and All Saints Square, right in the immediate vicinity of Cracow's authorities and the Franciscan basilica.

Mounted into the wall of the hall in Wyspiański Pavilion, the model presents a three-dimensional version of the „God the Father” – Let There Be! stained-glass decoration.



15. St. Peter's and Paul's church

Another models at Royal Road were prepared at St. Peter's and Paul's church and in St. Andrew's church just nearby. The church of St. Apostols Peter and Paul is the first baroque church in Cracow. It was founded by King Zygmunt III Waza who moved the state capital from Cracow to Warsaw. **The Model stands at the fence of the church.**

The model presents two churches: St Peter and St Paul's, and St Andrew's together with the building of the convent of Poor Clares.

Comments: Unmarked stairs. Very impressive maquette.



SOŁO P.W. ŚWIĘTYCH APOSTOŁÓW PIOTRA I PAWŁA TO PIERNISZA
TOWA W KRAKOWIE, KONSEKROWANA W 1636 R. BUDOWLĘ WZNO
SIZYCH. AUTOREM FASADY ORAZ WYSTROJU WNETRZA BYL GIOVAN

16. Church of St. Andrew

There is a Romanesque fortified church of St. Andrew of eleventh century in the vicinity. **There is a model of Romanesque window** on the wall surrounding the church. **You can recognize its shape and decorations.** The model is situated on a wall surrounding the little square by the Church of St Andrew at Grodzka Street 56. Descriptions in Braille are found on the sides of the model: in Polish and in English.

Comments: A model depicting the idea of the Roman window (on the wall surrounding the church).



17. Bishop Erasmus Ciolek palace

Bishop Erazm Ciołek Palace houses a branch of the National Museum in Krakow, displaying collections of artworks from the Old Polish Republic from medieval times until the end of the 18th century, as well as the Orthodox. The palace was the largest structure at Kanoniczna Street and now in its hallway there is a model of the building.

Comments: Lack of separate pavement, a number of rugged pavement.



18. Church of St. Idz

We get back to the Grodzka Street. At its outlet there is another tiny church of St. Idzi. Tradition says it was built in the XI century by Prince Władysław Herman as a thanksgiving for his son Bolesław Krzywousty. Archaeological studies do not confirm this information. The church was built much later, at the beginning of XIV century, according to Gothic style fashionable at that time. A Katyń Cross is standing before the church dedicated to polish officers murdered in the Soviet Union.

19. Wawel Royal Castle

Crowning of the Kings Road is called the Wawel Royal Castle. Here we will find the Royal Castle, the Cathedral with royal tombs, towers and walls.

This very important building is a resting place for beautiful sarcophagi of kings. Romanesque fortified castle was rebuilt by Kazimierz Wielki into a great Gothic castle. In 1500, after a fire, the Renaissance Wawel Castle was rebuilt in renaissance style.

Comments: Maquette contained in the courtyard is very impressive.



20. Wawel Dragon Cave

Wawel is associated with several legends, including Legend of Wawel Dragon. In the cave under the Wawel Castle, during the reign of King Krak lived a dragon that captured people and animals and then ate them, in which case it terrorized the town. A young shoemaker reported to the king and promised to slay the dragon and free the city. He took sheep's skin, stuffed it with sulfur and pitch and then threw the dragon to eat. The dragon ate it and then felt great thirst. In order to satisfy it, he drank water from Wisła River until its body burst. As a reward king Krak gave the young shoemaker his daughter to marry. Currently, fire throwing Wawel Dragon is a very popular tourist attraction.

Almost every visitor to Cracow wants to take a picture "under the dragon".

Comments: The road to the dragon's den is extremely hard for visually impaired or blind, because of heavily rugged pavement.

Recommendation

- The aim is to make all services, information and experiences accessible so that a blind or partially sighted visitor has the same choices as any other visitor.
- Meeting the needs of blind and partially sighted people often results in providing better access for all visitors.
- Blind and partially sighted people should be defined by their interests rather than by their sight loss.
- By providing clear, accessible information - you are improving access for everyone

KRAKOW opens its doors to tourists with special needs

Thank you for your attention.

