

# Accessibility in Suomenlinna

At Fort, Komarom  
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# Starting Point

- Accessible only by ferry, car-free zone
- Ferry-timetables follow seasonal visitor amounts
- Terrain & fortifications dangerous for the visually impaired
- Uneven cobblestone, gravel and sand paths difficult for visitors with impaired mobility
- Old buildings → Toilets for the disabled have to be added, lots of thresholds & narrow spaces
- All the residential buildings are three stories or less → no legal obligation to build lifts



# Planning Improvements with the Disability Organisation *Kynnys*

- Survey by Niina Kilpelä, an architect with impaired mobility, 2007
- Analysis of structural hindrances followed by development suggestions
- A historical site cannot be changed to 100 % accessible
- Small changes can make a big difference

*The survey suggested eg. that Suomenlinna's web-page "Accessibility" should include more photos from the site*

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## Accessibility

The Suomenlinna maritime fortress is a challenging environment for people with impaired mobility because of the fortifications and rocky terrain. Public facilities restored in recent years have been designed to be accessible.

Footpaths in Suomenlinna are paved with cobblestones, gravel or sand. Uneven sections cannot be avoided completely.

**Did you know?**  
Guide dogs and other assistance dogs are welcome at all Suomenlinna sights and places of interest.



# Actions

- **The Survey is consulted as the restoration programme is implemented**
- **More than 50 % of the less intrusive and more inexpensive suggestions in the Survey have been implemented**
- **The more resource intensive suggestions are largely still waiting for the implementation**



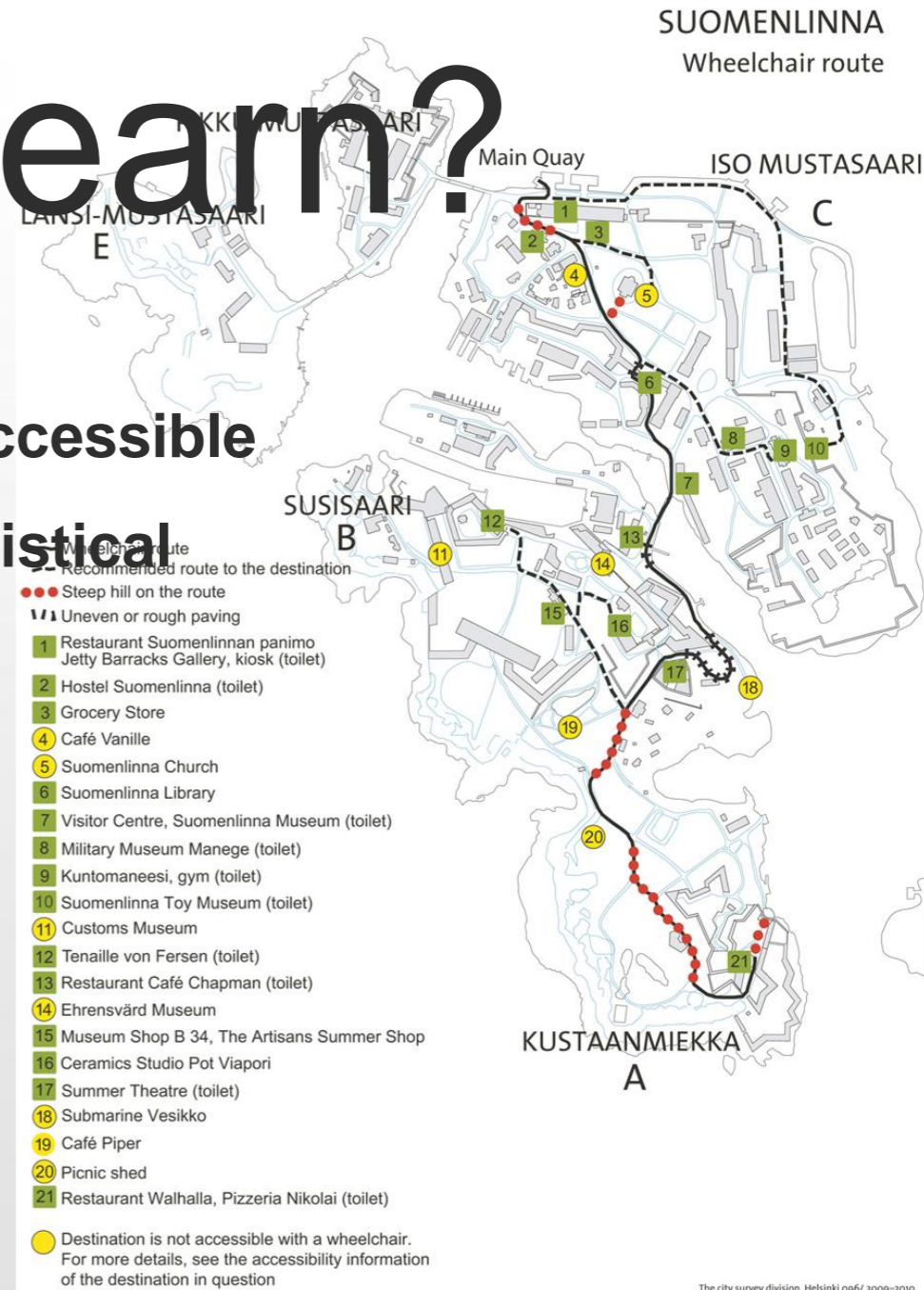
*The cobblestone surface has been partially replaced by a more even flagstone surface to ease the accessibility on a wheel chair.*



# What did we learn?

- **Every point of the fortress cannot be totally accessible**
- **Disability organisations' expectations are realistical**
- **Co-operation is the key**

*The small platform in front of the ferry ticket vending machine was too narrow. It actually prevented access on a wheel chair. Widening it was an easy and inexpensive correction once we knew it was a problem.*



*Wheelchair route shows the main attractions but also hindrances on it, including uneven pavement and steep parts of the route*



# Thank You!

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