

PLACE TO PLACE

A Web Guide

**About Mobility, Transport and Disabled
People in Scotland**

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1. Introduction

This paper was originally written in 2005 for the students on a course in Inclusive Environmental Access and Design at Heriot-Watt University's School of the Built Environment in Edinburgh (www.sbe.hw.ac.uk). The aim was to provide background and supporting information about mobility and transport when designing and developing the urban and rural environment with the requirements of disabled people in mind. It addressed the need for them to get to and from public open spaces and parks, leisure amenities, service outlets etc. as well as get around them. Sources for reference were given which could be followed up.

The paper was edited and updated in 2008 as a 'web guide' for members of the Scottish Accessible Transport Alliance (SATA) or anyone wanting help in accessing the wealth of information on the subject that this available on the internet or from organisational sources, especially those concerned with the planning and delivery of transport services. This is now a further updating in 2009 and the aim is to review it on a regular basis and incorporate additional references as they become known. So comments and suggestions will always be most welcome.

2. Mobility and transport needs, policy and legislation

2.1 Mobility and Transport Needs

Using the definition of disabled people in the *Disability Discrimination Act 1995*, Scotland is estimated to have one million disabled adults, that is 20% of the population.

Of these:

73% have some form of hearing loss and of these 80% are over 60

45% have some form of mobility impairment.

25% will experience a mental health problem in their lives

4% are registered blind or partially sighted

1.8% have a learning disability

1.5% require a wheelchair for mobility and more rely on one part of the time

The population is aging and impairments increase with age. Also people experience multiple difficulties, for example combining mobility and reach/grip. Research suggests that as many as a third have four or more separate and limiting difficulties. However these may have varying impacts over time. In transport terms, most disabled people cannot travel far without pausing for a rest. For wheelchair users this is on average about 150 yards. For many, it is likely to be 30-50 yards. A London travel survey identified that about a third of disabled people could only stand for less than 5 minutes, with about one in ten able to stand for a minute or less. (*Transport Provision for Disabled People in Scotland. Progress since 1998*. Reid Howie Associates 2004) (www.rhassoc.co.uk)

Using the social model of disability, no one need be 'transport disabled'. The aim is to identify and remove barriers to mobility and provide extra assistance when necessary. However research for the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC) found that for disabled people transport is the single most prominent concern at the local level. (*Attitudes of Disabled People to Public Transport*. MORI for DPTAC 2001-2) (www.dptac.gov.uk)

Earlier research by Reid Howie Associates in 1998 for the Scottish Executive (now the Scottish Government) found that:

- the main barrier facing many disabled people is the simple lack of accessible transport vehicles
- when disabled people transfer between transport modes this often requires a substantial wait.
- attitudes of public transport staff and disabled people's experience of this can be a significant contributory factor in whether they are likely to attempt to travel at all
- many disabled people live on low income and transport cost can represent a relatively high percentage of that income

In fact disabled people:

- travel one third less often than all transport users
- drive cars 47% less often than the general public, 79% never drive and

60% have no car in the household

- use taxis 67% more often
- find travel to work difficult (23%)
- do not have local authority bus concession (52%)
- do not hold a disabled person's rail card (90%)

A survey by Capability Scotland in 2004, *The Influence of Public Transport Provision on the Social Exclusion of Disabled People*, found that the bus/coach and car/van were the most popular form of transportation amongst disabled people and their careers. Taxis were also popular being used as a regular form of transport by 20% of the respondents. However 2/3rds felt that the cost of taxis meant they go out as often as they would like. Fifteen percent had cancelled a hospital or doctor's appointment because of problems with public transport. (www.capability-scotland.org.uk)

2.2 Policy and legislation

UK Government policy for transport is contained in the following statement:

“The Government is committed to comprehensive civil rights for disabled people. An integrated transport policy, which encompasses accessible public transport, public transport infrastructure and a barrier free pedestrian environment, is fundamentally important to delivering commitment.”

In the 2010: *The Government's Ten-year Transport Plan* (DETR 2000) the Government said “Building in accessibility for disabled people in all investment is a condition of public money being spent. Local authorities and transport operators should ensure that the transport needs of disabled people are factored into their plans and that the full benefits of improved public transport are accessible to all”. (www.dft.gov.uk)

Under reserved and devolved powers, the parliament in Westminster and Holyrood have enacted legislation to give effect to this policy, notably the Disability Discrimination Acts in 1995 and 2005 and the Transport (Scotland) Acts of 2001 and 2005. Both the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC), established by the *Transport Act 1985*

(www.dptac.gov.uk) and the Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS), under the *Transport (Scotland) Act 2001* (www.macscotland.gov.uk) advise Ministers on policy and practice.

2.3 UK disability rights legislation

Disabled people should be able to enjoy the same rights, choices and opportunities to use the whole transport and transport environment as non-disabled people.

Under part 3 of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1995*, it is unlawful to discriminate in the provision of goods, facilities and premises including transport services. It covers such things as information and ticketing as well as infrastructure such as waiting rooms at airports, ferry terminals, bus stations, railway stations etc. But because transport vehicles themselves were not at that time sufficiently adapted to provide access, the “use of any services so far as it consists of the use of a means of transport” was exempted. However part 5 of the DDA 1995 addressed this particular issue by allowing the government to bring in regulations specifying vehicle accessibility standards. This it has done for trains, buses and coaches- and it intends to do for taxis- setting time limits for compliance.

Under the DDA 1995, from October 2004 physical features have needed to be removed or modified to provide access and the DDA 2005 has now amended Part 3 to include a regulation making power to enable the Secretary of State to lift the exemption, in whole or in part, in respect of transport providers operating certain types of vehicles. In 2006 *Disability Discrimination (Transport Vehicles) Regulations* were made covering buses, coaches, private hire vehicles, taxis, trains, trams light rail, rental vehicles and breakdown recovery services. The Disability Rights Commission (now merged with the Equality and Human Rights Commission) issued a code of practice: *Provision and Use of Transport Vehicles, Code of Practice. Supplement to Part 3 Code of Practice, Disability Discrimination Act 2005*. It also published a series of practical guides to avoid disability discrimination in transport.

(www.equalityhumanrights.com)

The Part 3 and Part 5 regulations do not apply to aircraft or shipping vessels but operators still have duty under Part 3 to avoid discrimination and make reasonable adjustments to timetables, booking facilities, waiting rooms etc at airports and ferry terminals. There are also both UK and European non-statutory codes and guidance.

Under the powers exercised under Part 5 of the DDA 1995 to set accessibility standards for land based public transport vehicles, the following have or will be determined:

- since December 1998 trains adapted or new have to be compliant
- since December 2000 all new single and double decker buses as well as coaches with more than 22 seats have had to be accessible to ambulant disabled and sensory impaired people
- after January 2005 all new buses and coaches have had to be accessible to wheelchair users
- between 2010 and 2020 it is proposed that all new taxis in certain areas will have to meet specifications yet to be determined
- by January 2015 all single deck buses less than 7.5 tonnes will have to be compliant
- by 2016 all single deck buses more than 7.5 tonnes will have to be compliant
- by 2017 all double deck buses will have to be compliant
- by January 2020 all single and double deck coaches will have to be compliant.

2.4 Duty to promote disability equality

Under the 2005 DDA the 1995 Act has been further amended to place a ‘General Duty’ on all public authorities - the *Duty to Promote Disability Equality*. Included in this duty is the need to promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people. They also need to take steps to take account of people’s disabilities, even those where that involves treating them more favourably than others. This General Duty applies to every public authority and includes any person “certain of whose functions are of a public nature” i.e. exercising a function on behalf of the Government. In relation to policy

development and service delivery, the Duty will (inter alia):

- ensure that policy makers consider disabled people and impact upon them at the outset - that they 'build in' for disability
- encourage better co-ordination across departments and functions e.g. special planning and transport infrastructure, or planning of transport to ensure equal access for disabled people
- increase involvement of disabled people in policy making

As well as the General Duty, there are 'Specific Duties' on certain listed authorities (among them local councils and health boards) to prepare and publish a Disability Equality Scheme, and then be accountable for its implementation and publish annual reports. The Disability Rights Commission issued a *Statutory Code of Practice* with a separate version for Scotland. The Commission now forms part of the Equality and Human Rights Commission. (see www.equalityhumanrights.com)

2.5 Scottish policy and legislation

The Scottish Executive, in its *Integrated Transport Policy Proposals* in February 2000, set out to ensure that there was:

- integration within and between different modes of transport
- integration between transport and environment
- integration between transport and land-use planning
- integration of transport and other policies for education, health and wealth creation

To promote a more inclusive society, the Executive took powers in the *Transport (Scotland) Act 2001* to set a minimum level of travel concession for pensioners and people with a disability.

The provisions of the *Transport (Scotland) Act 2001* included powers for Scottish Ministers to:

- require public bodies to submit joint transport strategies and ticketing

schemes

- introduce road users charging schemes
- introduce travel concession schemes
- make grants for transport related purposes
- establish a committee (subsequently the Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS) set up in 2002) to consider matters relating to the transport needs of disabled people and give advice to Scottish Ministers
- permit local traffic authorities to designate 'Home Zones' to improve safety and the environment.

In the 1998 research by Reid Howie Associates for the Scottish Executive, referred to above, it was recommended that:

- public transport policy and co ordination should be sensitive to the needs of disabled people
- there should be physical access to services, including using appropriate facilities independently and privately.
- staff with an understanding of disability issues should be available.
- there should be clear information in relation to services and their accessibility
- there should be consultation with transport and infrastructure providers and policy makers

The statement in the Scottish Executive's 2004 Transport White Paper, *Scotland's Transport Future*, said the vision was:

“An accessible Scotland with safe, integrated and reliable transport that supports economic growth, provides opportunities for all and is easy to use; a transport system that meets everyone's needs, respects our environment and contributes to health; services recognized internationally for quality, technology and innovation, and for effective and well- maintained networks; a culture where fewer short journeys are made by car; where we favour public transport, walking and cycling because they are safe and sustainable; where transport providers and planners respond to changing needs of business,

communities and users; where one ticket will get you anywhere.”

Other Scottish Executive commitments were:

- a national scheme of free off-peak bus travel and some ferry travel for older and disabled people from April 2006 building on the national minimum standard for free off-peak bus travel for older and disabled people begun in September 2002
- start a concessionary scheme for young people
- assess how to make public transport more accessible for disabled people

Since its establishment in 2002, the Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS) has published the following guidance documents:

A Minimum Training Standard for Staff Assisting Disabled People

Transport Strategies: Planning for Inclusion

Valuable for Anyone, Valuable for Everyone: Accessible Information About Travel

It has also produced a series of policy statements on travel by train, bus/coach/minibus, taxis/phcs, and demand responsive transport (DRT).

(www.macscotland.gov.uk)

There are several guides to local transport planning and provision. The *Scottish Rural Transport Action Guide* published in 1996 by the (then) Scottish Office Central Research Unit gives practical advice on how to address a community’s transport needs with useful lists of contacts, support agencies, transport operators and information sources. *A Rural Transport Handbook* was the result of work carried out in the European project ARTS, Actions on the Integration of Rural Transport Services, and aims to assist in the planning, operation and evaluation of rural transport systems. (www.rural-transport.net)

Following the *Transport (Scotland) Act 2001*, local authorities were required to produce Local Transport Strategies and under the *Transport (Scotland) Act 2005* Statutory Regional Transport Partnerships were formed with the base requirement to produce Regional Transport Strategies. (www.scotland.gov.uk/topics/transport/regional-

[partnerships/contacts](#)) Consultation was a requirement in the formation and implementation of these strategies which need to contain specific proposals for equality, social inclusion and accessibility. Central to all strategies is the development of integrated and improved public transport.

The 2005 Act also provided for the appointment of a Roads Works Commissioner to regulate the design and maintenance of roads and the creation of a Road Works Register to provide real-time information on road works (www.roadworksscotland.org)

3 The transport environment and infrastructure.

A good general source for advice and specification on the pedestrian environment, public transport buildings and infrastructure is *Inclusive Mobility. A Guide to Best Practice on Access to Pedestrian and Transport Infrastructure*, written by Phillip Oxley for the Mobility and Inclusion Unit at the Department for Transport (DfT) and published in 2002. The shortened title, *Inclusive Mobility*, is used when referred to below.

The British Standards Institute publishes a *Code of Practice*, BS 8300 : 2009, on the *Design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of disabled people*. It explains how the built environment can be designed to anticipate, and overcome, restrictions that prevent disabled people making full use of premises and their surroundings, including rail, road, sea and air travel buildings and associated concourses and car parking buildings. (www.bsi-global.com)

In 2007 the Department for Transport published *Manual for Streets*. It applied formally only to England and Wales but contained useful guidance on the design of residential streets and neighbourhoods in Scotland. (www.dft.gov.uk) In 2008 the Scottish Government produced its own consultation document, *Designing Streets*, based on *Manual for Streets* and intended as a companion document to the first policy statement on the subject, *Designing Places*, published in 2001. (www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications)

The OPENspace Research Centre at the Edinburgh College of Art has a *Site Finder Toolkit* to help assess the way finding experience of people with visual impairments visiting the countryside. (www.openspace.eca.ac.uk)

3.1 Walking

Based on research in the late 1980s, *Inclusive Mobility* quotes the following walking distances: recommended average distance without a rest-

- wheelchair users 150 meters
- visually impaired 150 meters
- mobility impaired using sticks 50 meters
- mobility impaired using a walking aid 100 meters

These will be affected by gradients, weather conditions etc.

Inclusive Mobility Chapter 3 covers footways, footpaths and pedestrian areas, i.e. their width, gradients, fencing and railing, seating, barriers, ramps, steps, street furniture, street works, colour contrast, surfaces, obstructions, road crossings, dropped kerbs and raised crossings. Chapter 4 covers tactile paving surfaces.

The *Fieldfare Trust* promotes countryside access for disabled people by providing advice and training services backed by research. National standards for accessibility are set under the *BT Countryside for All* projects.

3.2 Cycle paths

In 2002 the Scottish Executive commissioned Sustrans to audit all traffic-free sections of the National Cycle Network to produce information for path users and providers. Its report in 2004 entitled *National Cycle Network in Scotland: Auditing Access for Disabled People*, describes how the audit was carried out and the result recorded, interpreted and documented. It also contains recommendations and guidelines for auditors.

The aim was not to dictate which routes disabled users should or should not use but instead to present sufficient information to enable users to make their own decisions

about whether a route was suitable for them or not, based on their knowledge of their own ability. (www.sustrans.org.uk)

3.3 Car parking

Recommendations for car parking spaces are given in Chapter 5 of *Inclusive Mobility*.

The Blue Badge scheme provides a national arrangement of parking concessions for people with severe walking difficulties who travel either as passengers. The scheme also applies to registered blind people and people with severe upper limb impairments who regularly drive vehicle but cannot turn a steering wheel by hand. It allows badge holders to park close to their destination but the national concession apply only to on-street parking under certain conditions (e.g. displaying the badge or not parking where there is a ban on loading and unloading). It is not a license to park anywhere. It does not apply to private roads or in-off street car parks although some may provide spaces for disabled people. (www.direct.gov.uk)

(www.scotland.gov.uk/topics/transport/road/BlueBadgeScheme)

The new style European Blue Parking Badge replaced the Orange Badge in April 2000 and the latter phased out in March 2003 (www.theaa.com)

A parking and motoring guide for Blue Badge holders, the *Gowerings Mobility UK Road Atlas* was produced in January 2000. (www.totalmobilityuk.co.uk)

(See also the on-line map website at www.bluebadges.direct.gov.uk or visit www.direct.gov.uk for a Blue Badge map)

3.4 Taxi ranks

Recommendations for taxi ranks are given in Chapter 7 of *Inclusive Mobility*. It says wherever feasible taxi ranks should be provided close to railway, bus and coach stations and all major attraction such as retail areas. They should be well signposted and allow passengers to board from the footway onto the nearside of the vehicle.

3.5 Bus stops

Recommendations for the bus stops are given in Chapter 6 of *Inclusive Mobility*. It says that in residential area stops should be located so that nobody is required to walk between 200 to 400 meters from home taking into consideration slopes, crossing places, etc. It covers bus stop and shelter design, seating and time table information.

4 Transport related buildings

Recommendations for access to and within all transport related buildings, together with facilities within or associated with them, are given in *Inclusive Mobility*.

4.1 Rail stations

Standards for rail stations and their facilities are set out in the *Train and Station Design for Disabled Passengers: A Code of Practice*. This Code was first issued in February 2002 by the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA). Under the Railways Act 2005 its functions were transferred to the Department of Transport (DfT) which in 2008 has produced a revised version to take account of minimum European standards set out in *Technical Specification for Interoperability: Persons with Reduced Mobility (PRM TSI)*. From July 2008 these standards will apply across the Trans-European Network (TEN). Under the Railways Act 2005 Scottish Ministers were given the power to produce their own code of practice to apply to Scottish services and stations in Scotland served by Scottish services. However until such time as Scottish Ministers choose to produce a code, the DfT code will apply in Scotland.

The Code of Practice sets out the regulatory framework and requirements for using the railway, including pre-travel information, locating the station, inside the station, getting to the platform, boarding, travelling and arriving. There are technical standards for such things as car parks, pedestrian routes, lightening levels, information displays, announcements, ticket offices and machines, seating, toilets, lifts, ramps, platforms etc. Details on staff training and how to help disabled people during emergencies are contained in a companion document *How to write your Disabled Persons' Protection Policy* (www.dft.gov.uk)

An *Access for All Fund* provided by the Department for Transport has over £370 million until 2015 for improvements at selected stations, 80% for capital measures such as step free access, customer information and public address systems and 20% on revenue for things like increased staffing. This is in addition to improvements delivered through franchising, major projects, investment in rolling stock, maintenance and renewal. The Fund's projects in Scotland are delivered in association with Transport Scotland.

Under the terms of their franchises, train operators are required to produce and annually revise *Disabled People's Protection Policies* (DPPPs) following guidance from the SRA in April 2002. In October 2004 First Group (First ScotRail) became operationally responsible for 341 of the stations in Scotland owned by Network Rail and its DPPP provides brief station facility information on all of them. (www.firstscotrail.com). Over the course of the seven year franchise it was committed to a £40 million investment programme of station refurbishment in which improvements to accessibility will be integral. In April 2008 the Scottish Government extended the franchise to November 2014.

Network Rail is directly responsible for the management of Edinburgh Waverley and Glasgow Central and has a generic *Disabled People's Protection Policy* (DPPP) for all its managed stations (www.networkrail.co.uk). It is also involved with the Scottish Government, Transport Scotland, regional and local authorities in developing new rail projects such as the Airdrie to Bathgate Rail Link, the Borders Railway and the Glasgow Airport Rail Link (GARL) (www.transportscotland.gov.uk/projects)

The Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC) (www.atoc.org) provides information on the accessibility of stations and services operated by all UK rail transport operators and details can be obtained through National Rail Enquires.

(www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations_destinations/disabled_passengers/access)

In March 2005 the SRA issued a consultation document *Railways for All* seeking views

on a 10 year strategy to make the railway more accessible for everyone. It said that by 2015 it “expected to see only relatively low use stations remain inaccessible to disabled people”. The Scottish Government is now responsible for the majority of rail powers in Scotland.

4.2 Sea ports and terminals

Shipping vessels remain exempt from UK legislation under part 5 of the DDA 1995 on the grounds that international standards need to be set. However the provisions of Part 3 apply to infrastructure at ports.

In November 2000 the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC) published *The design of large passenger ships and passenger infrastructure: guidance on meeting the needs of disabled people*. It covered in some details access to and within terminals as well as pre-journey information, shore to vessel transition, lights, steps, stairs and ramps on vessels, information and announcements, management and training. The document expanded on guidelines from the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) in June 1996 entitled *Recommendation on the Design and Operation of Passenger Ships to Respond to Elderly and Disabled Persons’ Needs*. The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) also issued a *Marine Guidance Note* (MGN31) to naval architects and ship designers, owners, operators and builders.

Caledonian Marine Assets Ltd (CMAL) is an asset-owning subsidiary responsible for the vessels and ports used by Caledonian MacBrayne Ferries Ltd (CalMac) (www.calmac.co.uk) the major operator of services to the Scottish islands. They are part of the David MacBrayne Group which is owned by the Scottish Government.

4.3 Airports

Recommendations on access to and within transport buildings together with facilities, signage etc given in *Inclusive Mobility* is applicable to airports.

DPTAC has a publication which covers both airports and access to planes: *Access to Air*

Travel: Guidance for Disabled and Less Mobile Passengers - A voluntary code of practice for the aviation industry and the Department for Transport has published *Access to Air Travel for Disabled People: Code of Practice - A companion guide for disabled people*.

The British Airports Authority (BAA) has a website (www.baa.com) through which disabled people can obtain advice and information about facilities at UK airports including Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Prestwick. Individual airports have guides which contain sections for people with 'special needs' (e.g. Edinburgh). Others such as Aberdeen (Tel: 01224 72515), have separate leaflets.

4.4 Modal interchanges

Ideally terminals should be located near each other to provide easy interchange between road, rail, sea and air services. Where at a distance, special links and arrangements will facilitate interchange between them, for instance fully wheelchair accessible bus services between city centres and airports. The tram link to Edinburgh Airport is due for completion in 2011 and the Glasgow Airport Rail Link (GARL) by 2012, both funded by the Scottish Government and managed by Transport Scotland.

(www.transportscotland.gov.uk/projects)

Car parking, taxi and bus facilities should be provided at all sizable interchanges, with the information about them available in various formats.

5 Aids to mobility

5.1 Signage, information and lighting

Recommendations for signage and information are given in Chapter 10 of *Inclusive Mobility* whilst lightening is covered in Chapter 11. It stresses the importance of good, clear, well-positioned signs directing people to services and facilities and including information such as distances. Audible information is essential for those with visual impairment and lightening can have both positive and negative effects. The recommendations of the *Code of Practice for Road Lightening* (BS 538900) are given.

The RNIB has developed the REACT guidance system for blind and sight impaired people and it is now being installed on rail stations, bus stops and other transport facilities. (www.rnib.org.uk)

5.2 Walking aids

There are very many aids to walking from sticks and crutches to frames and four-wheeled walkers. For example visit the website www.walkeze.co.uk

5.3 Manual wheelchairs

Measurements regarding wheelchair use are given in Chapter 2 of *Inclusive Mobility*. However these were based on research in 1999 and later publication *Wheels within wheels: a guide to using a wheelchair on public transport* (Ricability for DfT 2003) gives the dimensions of what is known as the 'reference wheelchair' (i.e. 1200mm in length with footplates, 700mm in width, and 1350mm sitting height). These will be compliant with regulations for buses, coaches and trains under the DDA (regulations for taxis have yet to be issued). They are more restrictive than given in *Inclusive Mobility* (i.e. 1500mm in length, 900mm in width, and 1374 in height) but said to be bigger than most manual wheelchairs in use.

Wheels within wheels gives details of manufacturers and models, dimensions, turning radius weight carried, slopes manageable and possible problems using public transport.

National Rail, the collective name for UK train operating companies, provides information on dimensions for access to train services (www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations_destinations)

6 Transport vehicles and services

The introduction to *Inclusive Mobility* gives the following warning:

“Part V of the DDA enabled regulations to be made concerning access onto and within buses, coaches, taxis and trains. The amount of space that is available, particularly in taxis and smaller buses, is quite restricted and because of this dimensions required by the regulation, for example to accommodate a passenger in a wheelchair, are limited. Generally there is more space in the built environment. People who wish to travel by public transport, particularly those who use a wheelchair, should not be misled into believing that a wheelchair that can be used in the pedestrian environment will necessarily be usable on public transport vehicles”. Advice is available in *Get Wheelchair Wise* from the Mobility and Inclusion Unit of DfT.

The publication *Wheels within Wheels: A guide to using wheelchairs on public transport* (Ricability for the DfT 2003) points out that the regulations set out the minimum requirements and operators can provide higher standards.

6.1 Powered wheelchair and scooters

More use is now being made of powered chairs and scooters either on a temporary or regular basis. *Wheels within Wheels* gives details of manufacturers and models, dimensions, turning radius, weight carried, slopes manageable and possible problems using public transport.

The Queen Elizabeth’s Foundation Mobility Centre has a publication *How to Choose a Powered Vehicle* and the Disabled Living Foundation has free fact sheets in print or to be

downloaded from its website www.dlf.org.uk

National Rail provides information on dimensions etc for access to train services (www.nationalrail.co.uk/stations_destinations)

Visitors and other indoor and outdoor attractions can have chairs and scooters available for visitors to use. Shopmobility schemes exist in major shopping centres and malls. (www.justmobility.co.uk/shop).

6.2 Cars

Cars provide convenient and personal door to door transport for a wide range of disabled people whether as drivers or passengers. For many people, they are the only form of transport available or accessible. There are an estimated 250,000 drivers and passengers in the UK who have disability and this is likely to increase. However there are barriers created by the management and operation of roads and parking systems whilst the design of vehicles can restrict access.

DPTAC has a section on its website www.dptac.gov.uk devoted to motoring and has a number of publication such as *Facilities for Disabled Motorist at Filling Stations*.

The Ins and Outs of Choosing a Car. A guide for older and disabled people and *Getting a Wheelchair Into a Car* are amongst a number of publications by Ricability, the trading name of the Research Institute for Consumers affairs (RICA). It is a charity that researches and publishes information on products and services for older and disabled people (www.ricability.org.uk).

Mobility centres around UK give practical and independent advice and assessment. The Motability organisation has a *Vehicle Suitability Guide* on its website www.motability.co.uk and its motability scheme provides affordable vehicles on contract hire or hire purchase or other useful services.

6.3 Taxis and private hire cars.

The *Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982*, as amended (including by the DDA 1995), makes provisions in Section 20 for the licensing of taxis and private hire cars in Scotland.

In October 2003 the UK Government announced proposal for implementing the taxi provision of the DDA 1995. These would allow it to set standards for wheelchair access and a range of other features to help disabled people use taxis. In England and Wales 'First Phase' areas of high use were to be targeted for their introduction over a 10 year period from 2010 to 2020. Voluntary guidance would be issued for other areas in the first instance. In Scotland and Northern Ireland were to have separate consultations.

In February 2009 the Department for Transport issued a *Consultation on Improving Access to Taxis*. (www.dft.gov.uk/consultations) It asked for views on the potential impacts, costs and benefits of various courses of action including regulation, and it included an impact assessment and draft technical specifications for interim and advanced standards. The Department said it intended to issue best practice guidance later that year.

In Scotland figures from the Scottish Government show there are 10,000 taxis but half of them operate in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen and Dundee. Only 40% are wheelchair accessible and the main urban centres have 77% of them. A previous survey report by the Scottish Accessible Transport Alliance (SATA) in 2001, *Accessible and Affordable Taxis in Scotland*, had borne out this patchy figure and also the variety of licensed vehicles outside of Edinburgh and Glasgow where the black cab was standard. SATA also revealed that only half of local authorities operated taxi concession scheme and in the Strathclyde area there were none. In September 2003 the Department for Transport suggested that local authorities should develop local accessibility policies for taxis prior to the introduction of taxi regulations under the DDA 1995.

Scottish Government figures show that there are also some 10,000 licensed private hire cars operating in Scotland. They are spread more evenly than licensed taxi but only 1.7%

have access for wheelchair users and large areas have no accessible vehicles at all. In 2001 the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC) produced a leaflet *Advice for Taxi Drivers* and in 2003 published a good practice guide *Making Private Hire Services More Accessible to Disabled People* which covered booking, vehicle and driver identification, driver training, personal security and affordability issues. (www.dptac.gov.uk) The Northern Ireland Transport Advisory Committee (TAC) has *A Code of Practice for Taxis Drivers*. (e-mail: tac@disabilityaction.org)

6.4 Demand responsive transport

There are now generically named Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) services using a variety of vehicles. Included are dial-a-ride, dial-a-bus, ring and ride, flexible route bus services, taxibus, car schemes, etc. Some have been operating for many years in the voluntary, public and private sectors. There are schemes aimed at co-ordinating local services and supporting them with information and training.

In November 2004 Government research identified 145 schemes by location, organizational characteristics, service design, legislation and resourcing. Most set out to meet identified local needs which were not provided for by conventional transport. The majority were not available to the general public being specialist services for elderly and mobility impaired people. However the extreme rural areas of Highlands, Argyll and Bute and the Shetlands have a high proportion of non-specialist services reflecting the need to develop solutions where conventional services are not a sustainable transport option. In-depth case study were also undertaken and the Government has funded a number of pilot schemes.

Examples of the most established DRT services are the Dial-a-Ride and Dial-a-Bus services operated by Handicabs (Lothian) (www.handicabs.org.uk), those provided by Order of Malta Dial-a-Journey (www.dial-a-journey.org) and the Dial-a-Bus scheme run by the Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (www.spt.so.uk)

6.5 Minibuses

There are some 80,000 to 100,000 small buses in the UK either operated as public transport providing local education, social and other services, or as community transport under Section 19 or Section 22 of the *Transport Act* 1985. There is no all-embracing legislation covering specifications for the small bus sector but DPTAC has published *Accessibility Specifications for Small Buses Designed to Carry 9-22 Passengers* in order to promote best practice (www.dptac.gov.uk). The Community Transport Association (CTA) also has a large number of publications including the following:

Accessible Minibuses

Community Buses - The Operation of Local Bus Services by Community Groups
Minibuses and the Law

Minibus Management

(www.communitytransport.com).

6.6 Buses and coaches

DPTAC says everyone should be able to use bus and coach services, including bus stations and information. For many people this is currently not possible due to barriers created by design, management and operation of local bus and coach services and surrounding infrastructure. DPTAC publications include:

Recommended Specification for Small Buses Used to Operate Local Services

(Revised July 1995)

Recommended Specification for Low Floor Buses

(www.dptac.gov.uk).

Issued under DDA 1995 Part 5, the *Public Service Accessibility Regulations* 2000 apply to all buses and coaches operating to a published timetable with a capacity exceeding 22 passengers.

- all single deck buses less than 7.5 tonnes will have to be compliant by January 2015
- all single deck buses more than 7.5 tonnes will have to be compliant by 2016
- all double deck buses will have to be compliant by 2017

- all single and double deck coaches will have to be compliant by January 2020

6.7 Trains

The construction and the use of new rail vehicles is governed by technical accessibility regulations made under Part 5 of the DDA. The *Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations* (RVAR) in 1998 applied to all new trains coming into service after 31st December 1998. The end date by which all trains in service must be accessible has been set at 2020.

Among the RVAR requirements are:

- * the provision of travel information which can be seen as well as heard
- * a minimum number of designated spaces for wheelchair users
- * boarding devices for wheelchair users
- * priority seats
- * accessible toilets
- * contrasting features such as handrails and doors

Where appropriate and possible RVAR standards will also be adopted for existing trains when refurbished. Under the 2003 *Rolling Stock Strategy* produced by the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) – now under the Railways Act 2005 the direct responsibility of the Department for Transport (DfT) and Scottish Ministers - refurbishment programmes must take into account the views of the interested parties including disability groups. By 2008 over 4,700 rail vehicles, including almost half of the heavy rail fleet, are subject to RVAR. Most older vehicles have some access features improved to the standards when they have undergone refurbishment or refresh work.

As mentioned in Section 4.1 above, standards for rail stations and their facilities are set out in detail in the *Train and Station Design for Disabled Passengers. A Code of Practice*. However unlike the earlier 2002 edition, standards regarding boarding and travelling on the train are not included but contained in the applicable vehicle regulations. These have to be met by train operators as a condition of their licence and from July 2008 they are to reflect European standards under the Rail Vehicle Accessibility

(Interoperability Rail System) Regulations 2008.

In March 2005 the SRA issued a consultation document *Railways for All* seeking views on a ten year strategy to make the railway more accessible for everyone. The key elements were:

- * readily available and accurate information
- * physically accessible rolling stock and stations wherever reasonable
- * availability and training of staff
- * alternative accessible provision where access to the rail network cannot reasonably be provided at a given location.

6.8 Trams

The introduction of new European standards covering heavy rail vehicles in July 2008 meant that the Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations (RVAR) 1998 had to be amended to remove these vehicles from its scope. In April 2009 the Department for Transport then consulted on proposals to amend the regulations to cover light rail vehicles, including trams, and with an end date of 2020 by which they must be accessible. (www.dft.gov.uk/consultations/open)

Using experience in Europe and other cities in the UK, the City of Edinburgh Council is reintroducing trams in Edinburgh by 2011. It says modern trams are comfortable and clean, smooth running, energy and space efficient. They are also safe, reliable and accessible. The necessary legislation was passed by the Scottish Parliament and three lines are proposed, one a northern circular route, one out to Edinburgh airport and beyond, and ultimately a third to the southern outskirts. The project is being developed by the Council's arms-length company Transport Initiatives Edinburgh (tie limited). (www.tramtime.com)

6.9 Subway

The new RVAR regulations will also apply to vehicles used on underground rail services. The only subway system in Scotland is in Glasgow and is managed by Strathclyde

Partnership for Transport (SPT) (www.spt.co.uk). It was built in 1896 and has 15 stations. Its platforms and trains are on a small scale and enlargement would be very costly. Presently it carries some 14 million passengers a year. Access for people with wheelchairs, scooters and buggies is not advised but there have been other improvements and consultation on a development project was launch in 2009.

Describe Online (www.describe-online.com) has a useful guide for blind and partially sighted people (www.spt.co.uk/subway/describe)

6.10 Ships

As mentioned above, shipping vessels are exempt from Part 5 of the DDA, 1995 on the grounds that international standards need to be set. However in November 2000 the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC) published *The Design of Large Passenger Ships and Passenger Infrastructure: guidance on meeting the needs of disabled people* which covered shore to vessel transition, on-board accommodation, lifts, steps, stairs and ramps on vessels, information and announcements, management and training. (www.dptac.gov.uk)

The document expanded on guidelines from the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) in June 1996 entitled *Recommendations on the Design and Operation of Passenger Ships to Respond to Elderly and Disabled Persons' Needs*. The Maritime and Coastguards Agency (MCA) also issued a *Marine Guidance Note* (MGN31) in 1997 to naval architects and ship designers, owners, operators and builders. (www.mcga.gov.uk)

DPTAC has been considering similar guidance for small vessels, defined as less than 500 GT and carrying less than 250 passengers.

Caledonian MacBryne Ferries Ltd (CalMac) (www.calmac.co.uk) and North Link Ferries Ltd (www.northlinkferries.co.uk) are the major operators of ferry services to the Scottish islands. Caledonian Marine Assets Ltd (CMAL) is an asset-owning subsidiary of CalMac for vessels and ports. They are all part of the David MacBrayne Group which is owned by the Scottish Government.

6.11 Planes

In 2004/5 from the 861 transport-related calls to the Disability Rights Commission Helpline, 271(32%) concerned airline services and infrastructure. Like shipping, air carriers are not subject to UK DDA legislation in so far as air services are concerned but there are now *European Union Regulations Concerning the Rights of Persons with Reduced Mobility When Travelling by Air* which give them the same rights as other citizens to freedom of movement, freedom of choice and non-discrimination. The regulations apply to all main airports and air carriers and set quality standards for assistance, staff training and redress.

In 2002 the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC) published *European Voluntary Commitments on Air Passenger Rights* including a protocol for people with reduced mobility (www.ecac-ecac.org).

In 2003 DPTAC published *Access to Air Travel: Guidance for Disabled and Less Mobile Passengers - A Voluntary Code of Practice for the Aviation Industry*. (www.dptac.gov.uk/pubs/aviation). This complemented the DfT's publication the same year, *Access to Air Travel for Disabled People – Code of Practice*, which is aimed at helping the aviation industry improve services. In 2005 the DfT commissioned a follow-up monitoring study which was published in 2006. (www.dft.gov.uk/transportforall/access/aviationshipping).

In 2007 DPTAC published *A Design Specification for On-Board Wheelchair for Commercial Passenger Aircraft* (www.dptac.gov.uk/pubs/aviation)

Plane Easy is published by the RNIB as a guide for visually impaired people. (www.rnib.org.uk). RADAR has *Access to Air Travel* (www.radar.org.uk) and the Disabled Living Foundation has published *A Practical Guide to Air Travel for Elderly People with Disability*. (www.dlf.org.uk)

7 Support Services

7.1 Travel cards and ticketing

The Thistle Travel Card Scheme was developed by ENABLE with funding from the Scottish Executive. It was introduced in September 2002 and is designed to indicate to transport staff that the holder may need extra help such as needing more time to find a seat, counting money, checking the destination and operating equipment. It is particularly useful for people with learning difficulties, dementia and epilepsy. (www.enable.org.uk)

Tickets and cards which permit through inter-modal travel reduce difficulties in negotiating terminal and interchanges. Ticket machines and barriers, especially when not staffed, present obstacles for many people especially blind people and wheelchair users.

7.2 Fare concessions

In December 1999 the (then) Scottish Executive announced the introduction of free travel for blind people throughout Scotland on rail, bus, ferry and underground services, delivered by a voluntary partnership between the Executive, local authorities, Strathclyde Passenger Transport and transport operators. It then took powers in 2001 to specify a minimum level of travel concessions within Scotland for all pensioners and those with a disability. Under the *Transport (Scotland) Act 2005* this was extended in a Scotland Wide Free Bus Travel Scheme to provide travel by scheduled bus (and some ferry) services for the over 60s and certain eligible disabled people from April 2006. It was reviewed in 2008-9 and eligibility extended to include from April 2011 HM service personnel and veterans under the age of 60 who were seriously injured in service and resident in Scotland.

A Scotland-wide Concessionary Travel Scheme for Young People was introduced in January 2007. (www.givememycard.org) Both schemes are administered by the Scottish Government's transport agency Transport Scotland. (www.transportscotland.gov.uk)

Local authorities provide a range of concessions on transport but where they exist they

can differ widely in scope and provision, for instance in the ‘Taxicard’ schemes run by thirteen authorities out of thirty-two . Transport operators themselves also offer concessionary fares and discounts, for example on the railways and ferries - the former through Network Rail (www.networkrail.co.uk) and the latter negotiated by Mobilise (formed by a merger of the Disabled Drivers Association and the Disabled Drivers Motor Club) for its members. (www.mobilise.info)

7.3 Information

Transport and travel information for disabled people to help them make informed decision and choices is provided by *Door-to-Door* on the DPTAC website www.dptac.gov.uk.

DIAL UK provides a network of local disability information and advice centres run by and for disabled people with publications including a user guide *Transport and Travel for Disabled People*. (www.dialuk.info)

Many local authorities such as Aberdeenshire (Public Transport Unit Tel. 01224 664581) and Fife (Transportation Services Tel. 01592 413380) produce guides and leaflets covering concessionary travel, parking, escort services, accessible vehicles and public transport.

Transport operators have a range of information on their websites which can be accessed direct or via Traveline Scotland (www.travelinescotland.com). Transport Direct is Britain’s free online journey planner (www.transportdirect.info). Information on urban and regional transport in Europe is provided by the interactive portal ELTIS (www.eltis.org)

The Community Transport Association (CTA) provides an advice and information services for its members and mounts public exhibitions (www.communitytransport.com)

The Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS) published guidance in 2003

on accessible information about travel *Valuable for Anyone, Valuable for Everyone*. Aimed mainly at transport providers, it deals with information people need when planning and booking, making the journey, dealing with service changes, reaching potential users and receiving complaint. (www.macscotland.gov.uk)

The Scottish Accessible Information Forum (SAIF) was set up in 1995 as a result of a report *Enabling Information*. It asserts the right of disabled people and carers to have access to timely and accurate information about a wide range of services. It believes that rather than being forced to rely on others, disabled people should receive information directly and in their preferred format. Publications available on line from www.saifscotland.org.uk include:

- * *Standards for Disability Information and Advice Provision in Scotland (Revised 2004)*
- * *Barrier Free Information, A Practical Guide on How to Develop a Local Accessible Information Strategy*

A code of good practice *Printed Public Transport Information* is produced by the Association of Transport Coordinating Officers (ATCO). (www.atco.org.uk)

On-line audio guides to public places are useful for visually impaired people and others needing help to negotiate public places such as rail and bus stations. Visit the Described On-Line website www.describe-online.com

UPDATE is Scotland's national disability information service. The *Scottish Formats Resource* provides contact details of transcription, translation and interpretation services available to Scotland. Details of UPDATE's services are on www.update.org.uk

Inclusion Scotland produces an A-Z Directory of *Disability and Equality Groups and Organisations*. (www.inclusionscotland.org)

7.4 Training

Disability awareness and equality training for transport staff and all levels is now seen as

a key factor in the development of services. The Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS) published a *Recommended Minimum Training Standards for Staff Assisting Disabled People (MACS 2004)*. It says “Good communication is key to passenger safety, comfort and satisfaction. It is particularly important that employees or contractors receive appropriate training if they are to ably assist disabled people”. The standards covers attitudes and communication, providing physical assistance, handling mobility aids, assisting with special equipments or aids. (www.macscotland.gov.uk)

GoSkills, the training arm of the Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT), sets standards for the staff training in the bus and coach industry (www.goskills.org). Some local authorities provide training for taxi drivers and the Northern Ireland Transport Advisory Committee (TAC) has a training course for taxi drivers with an accreditation scheme based on a *Code of Practice for Taxi Drivers* (e-mail address: tac@disabilityaction.org).

In their *Disabled Person’s Protection Policies (DPPs)* rail industry operators are committed to providing staff training in accordance with the former Strategic Rail Authority’s Code of Practice *Train and Station Services for Disabled Passengers*.

The Community Transport Association (CTA) has developed MIDAS, the nationally accepted training and assessment scheme for all types of minibus drivers, and PATS the passenger’s assistant training scheme. It also has training for taxi and private hire drivers in special needs (SENS) awareness. Its many publications include:

- * *The Bus and Coach Driving Manual*
- * *Minibuses and the Law,*
- * *Minibus Management and Accessible Minibuses*

(www.communitytransport.com)

The National Register of Access Consultants (NRAC) is a resource for those seeking advice on how to develop inclusive environments in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005. As well as the register of accredited access auditors

and consultants, it has information on training courses. (www.nrac.org.uk)

7.5 Co-ordination

The Association of Transport Coordinating Officers (ATCO) (www.atco.org.uk) is an organisation of local authority staff in key rolls for policy development and joint working both within the authorities and in the wider transport field.

Some community transport agencies co-ordinate voluntary services in their area sometimes with pooled resources. Examples are Lothian Community Transport Services operating in Edinburgh and Midlothian (www.lcts.org.uk) and the DARTS scheme by the Angus Rural Transport Forum which uses existing vehicles to provide a central co-ordinate response to rural transport needs.

7.6 Research

Over the past few years research has been sponsored by the Department for Transport and DPTAC for example work undertaken by MORI (now Ipsos Mori (www.ipsos-mori.com)) and Ricability (www.ricability.org.uk). Also by the Scottish Executive for example undertaken by Reid-Howie Associates (www.rhassoc.co.uk), Capability Scotland (www.capability-scotland.org.uk) and TNS consortium (www.tnsglobal.com).

Recent Scottish research includes:

- * *Actions Required to Improve the Mobility of Disabled People*. TAS and DHC 2006
- * *How to Plan and Run Flexible and Demand Responsive Transport*. DHC, TAS & University of Aberdeen 2006.
- * *Tackling the Abuse of Off-Street Parking for People with Disabilities*. TTR 2007 (www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Research)

Recently European research has been undertaken under the ECLIPSE programme (www.eclipse-eu.net), EuroAccess (www.euro-access.org) and Public Transport Access (www.ptaccess.eu).

Some charities have research units, for example RNIB's Scientific Research Unit (www.tiresias.org) and universities have transport research departments or associated units, for example Aberdeen/Institute for Transport and Rural Research (ITRR) (www.abdn.ac.uk/ittr), Napier University/Transport Research Institute (TRI) (www.tri.napier.ac.uk), and Leeds University/Reasonable Access (www.reasonableaccess.info).

8 Conclusion

As indicated in these pages, there is no shortage of information, advice, guidance, policies and strategies although we need (and will) always add to our knowledge and understanding. However the actual experiences of disabled people show that there is still a long way to go towards implementing their findings and recommendations. The continuing story is of problems and difficulties for many when attempting to travel or in the process of travelling, so much that they are prevented from doing so or are reluctant to try.

Physical barriers are often the easiest to break down. Although some to do with transport vehicles for instance, will only gradually be removed over the next 15 years as regulations take effect. Comprehensive audits of the transport environment and infrastructure are important to achieved better access. More difficult to counteract are people's lack of awareness and knowledge: the bewildering array of information presents it own problems. Still more challenging are insensitive attitudes and prejudices. These can be confronted legally under the DDA but will also rely on personal communication and formal education and training programmes.

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Scottish Consumer Council (SCC): www.scotconsumer.org.uk

Scottish Disability Equality Forum (SDEF): www.sdef.org.uk

Scottish Government (SG): www.scotland.gov.uk

Scottish Road Works Register: www.roadworksscotland.org

Scottish Taxi Federation (STF): www.scottaxifed.org

Scottish Transport Studies Group (STSG): www.stsg.org

Shetland Transport Partnership (STP): www.shetland.gov.uk/transport/stp

South East Scotland Regional Transport Partnership (SEStran): www.sestran.gov.uk

South West of Scotland Transport Partnership (SWESTRANS): www.swestrans.org.uk

Stagecoach: www.stagecoachbus.com

Steer Davies Gleave: www.steerdaviesgleave.com

Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT): www.spt.co.uk

Sustrans: www.sustrans.org.uk

TAS Partnership: www.tas.uk.net

Tayside and Central Regional Transport Partnership (TACRAN): www.tactran.gov.uk

Tiresias (RNIB Scientific Research Unit): www.tiresias.org

TRANSform Scotland: www.transformscotland.org.uk

Transport Direct: www.transportdirect.info

Transport Research Institute (TRI) Napier University: www.tri.napier.ac.uk

Transport Scotland: www.transportscotland.gov.uk

Traveline Scotland: www.travelinescotland.com

UPDATE: www.update.org.uk
