

SATA

Scottish Accessible Transport Alliance

Scottish Charity No 027600

Networking on Transport

ANNUAL REPORT

2006/7

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1. Introduction

SATA is a Scotland-wide association of individuals and groups whose aim is to work for the provision of accessible transport as a basic right for all people. This report outlines its concerns and activities over the year to the Annual General Meeting on 13th September 2007.

2. Membership

The membership of SATA is made up of individuals and representatives from a mix of voluntary, statutory and commercial organisations, including many groups of disabled people, local authorities, national agencies and transport operators. Currently the total number of members is 76, comprising 60 corporate bodies and 16 individuals. These are listed in Appendix A.

Membership is based on the payment of an annual subscription unless waived by the Management Committee, the rates to be agreed at an Annual General Meeting or Special Meeting.

All members are invited to 'full' and 'open' meetings and receive copies of agenda, minutes and other papers. Between meetings they are kept abreast with transport developments and issues.

3. Full and Open Meetings of Members

SATA's constitution says that full meetings of SATA members should be held not less than three times a year. It has been decided that some of these will be advertised as being open to non-members. In line with this, full meetings took place at Dial-a-Journey, Stirling, on the afternoons of 16th November and 8th February. An open meeting took place in Inverness on 17th May and another will be held in Edinburgh following the AGM on 13th September.

Agenda items have included information exchange and feedback from other meetings and conferences. The following gave presentations:

February: Gordon Catchlove, Fraud Prevention Officer, City of Edinburgh Council, on Blue Badge Scheme Enforcement.

May: Ranald Robertson, Programme Manager, HITRANS, on Making Bus Services Across the Highlands and Islands More Accessible.

The subject for presentations at the **September** meeting will be Demand Responsive Transport – Developing Flexible, Affordable and Coordinated Services. The speakers are Alastair Short of SESTRAN and Wayne Pearson of Handicabs (Lothian).

4. Management Committee and Office Bearers

Meetings of the Committee were held immediately before the full meetings in Stirling in November and February on the dates given above. In May the committee met in Stirling on 10th May, a week before the open meeting in Inverness.

At the AGM in September, Stanley Flett, Maggie Killin, Alan Rees and Peter Ingram-Monk were re-elected respectively as Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer/Membership Secretary. Peter Ingram-Monk resigned in March due to pressure of work. Alan Rees took over his responsibilities on an interim basis from April at the start of the new financial year.

The following were elected as Committee Members: Paul Cross, Bob Edwards, Douglas Gilroy, Victoria Cunningham, Pat McGuigan, Jim Ritchie and Muriel Williams.

5. Business

The following matters were considered during the year:

Scottish Parliament

The report ‘Removing Barriers and Creating Opportunities’ produced by the Parliament’s Equal Opportunities Committee in March which made 27 recommendations on transport. The report was the result of a long running inquiry following the European Year of Disabled People in 2003. Among the recommendations was a call for a “coherent and comprehensive strategy for achieving equality of mobility for disabled people” which should be “an

integral part of national, regional and local transport strategies” and backed up by “clear target setting and monitoring”. Disabled people should be actively in the strategic development, design, implementation and monitoring of transport services.

Jackie Bailie MSP published her proposals for a Disabled Person’s Parking Bill. SATA members welcomed them and now hope the proposals will go forward in the new session following the May elections.

Scotland’s National Transport Strategy

The Scottish Executive consulted on its National Transport Strategy (NTS) in April 2006 and SATA responded in July as reported in last year’s annual report. It was finally published in December in full and summary form and was later followed by ‘daughter’ documents on bus and rail services.

Included in the National Strategy was a commitment to “promote improvement of the overall accessibility of the transport network for older and disabled people and those with limited mobility”. The Executive said “We would like to see duties for transport authorities and providers enforced and policed through the setting of targets that are clear and can be properly monitored. Such targets need to relate to measurable outcomes of transport initiatives rather than the provision of services. Contracts with transport operators should include specific relevant performance measures.”

On taking office after the May election, the new administration has undertaken to pursue the strategy whilst reassessing some of the major transport projects put forward by its predecessors.

Transport Scotland

Representatives of the new Scottish Executive agency, Transport Scotland, have attended SATA meetings as observers. SATA was represented at meetings of its Scottish Rail Accessibility Forum and the Roads for All working group.

Concessionary Fare Schemes

As reported last year, the Executive introduced the Scotland-wide free bus scheme for older and disabled people from April 2006. It is committed to spending £322 million on the scheme over the next two years including the introduction of smart cards. Since the launch there has been a reported uptake of over 950,000 cards but as SATA anticipated many eligible people

are unable to benefit from the scheme notably because many bus and coach services are inaccessible or unavailable. We therefore welcome the undertaking to review the scheme after two years and as part of this review to consider extending the scheme to include flexible, demand responsive and community transport services.

The Executive consulted on amendments to the Blue Badge Scheme. SATA raised no objection but did oppose the proposal to give local authorities discretion to raise the badge charge from £2 to £20.

Regional Transport Strategies

The seven Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) were established during this period and consulted on their Regional Transport Strategies (RTS). SATA representatives attended a number of stakeholder meetings around the country and responded in detail to the various proposals. The May meeting in Inverness was addressed by a representative from HITRANS and at the meeting following the AGM in September a representative from SESTRAN will give a presentation.

Disability Rights and Transport

SATA welcomed the coming into force on 4th December 2006 of the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 which ended the exemptions under Part 3 of the 1995 Act in respect of transport services. From the same date there were also new provisions for public authorities, including local authorities, health authorities and regional transport partnerships, to have a duty to promote disability equality (the Disability Equality Duty).

The Disability Rights Commission launched a campaign for increased disability rights awareness and published 'A Practical Guide for Buses and Scheduled Coaches', the first of a series of Good Practice Guides for Transport Providers under the heading 'Transport and Discrimination'.

Public Transport Services

(1) Bus coach services

The national Scotland-wide concession scheme has benefited many older and disabled people but has excluded others because of the absence of accessible services. At the February meeting in Stirling, Stagecoach demonstrated a lift-equipped coach and in June members attended the 'Try a Bus' day in Edinburgh organised by ECAS.

A Young Scot concession scheme for young people aged 16 to 18 was introduced in January and also covered train and ferry travel.

(2) Taxi and private hire services

In November SATA's Secretary attended a meeting of the Scottish Taxi Federation in Stirling over their members' concerns about the impact of the new provisions under Part 3 of the DDA 1995 and to explain SATA's policy.

Along with others, representations were made to the City of Edinburgh Council asking for a review of its policy not to issue taxicards to holders of the national bus Entitlement Card and this was later undertaken and the policy changed.

SATA did not take a position on proposals to amend the licensing regulations for taxi vehicles in the city, recognising that there were many issues involved and its members were reflecting different views.

RADAR asked to use SATA's policy statement on taxis and private hire cars in its publicity campaign.

Members' attention was drawn to a paper 'Improving Access to Taxis' submitted to the European Conference of Ministers of Transport in February amid concerns that the Department for Transport was moving away from its long-standing commitment to introduce mandatory regulations under Part 5 of the DDA.

(3) Rail services

Representatives of First ScotRail have regularly attended meetings and given detailed reports on developments. Network Rail, GNER and Virgin Trains have also attended on occasion.

At the invitation of First ScotRail, members took part in a Mystery Shopper exercise. The UK-wide watchdog 'Passenger Focus' has approached SATA to assist in a similar scheme it is sponsoring.

The impact of ticket barriers, especially for blind and sight impaired people, has been a matter of on-going concern as the installation of these barriers at stations across Scotland has increased. However the provision of additional staff at gates appears to have eased the problem.

Proposals for major improvements at Waverley, Haymarket and Aberdeen have been the subject of consultation, as have the development of Glasgow and Edinburgh airport rail links and the new Airdrie-Bathgate line.

With more rail network responsibilities now devolved to Scotland, Transport Scotland will shortly be consulting on a revision of the train and station Code of Practice as will First ScotRail and other operators on their Disabled Persons' Protection Policies (DPPPs)

(4) Air services

SATA responded positively to the earlier consultation on EU proposals for regulations regarding the carriage of disabled people and people with reduced mobility when travelling by air. We welcomed the introduction of these regulations and proposals to enforce them partially from July 2007 and completely from July 2008 whilst at the same time having concerns about the ability of small airports to implement them without additional government funding.

(5) Ferry services

In association with stakeholders, including the Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS) the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC) has been revising its guidance on the design of ferries. MACS has a particular concern for the accessibility of small vessels operating between the Scottish islands.

Transport Environment

Transport Scotland has undertaken an audit of the trunk road network to meet its duties under the Disability Equality Duty and SATA assisted Halcrow in the gathering of evidence as well as being represented on a working group.

Initiated by SATA member, Peter Ingram-Monk, the School of the Built Environment at Heriot Watt University has successfully run a number of courses on Inclusive Environmental Access and Design. To assist students to understand the mobility and transport implications, Alan Rees was commissioned to write 'Place to Place' as a guide to sources of information on transport policies and services in Scotland. This is now being updated and made more widely available.

6. Contacts with other organisations

As well as its members, SATA maintains contact with the following:

Access Exchange International

Access for All Forum

Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC)

Borders Rural Transport Forum

Bus and Coach Watchdog

Department for Transport

Derek Haldane Consultancy

Describe Online

Dial-a-Journey, Stirling

Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC)

Disability Rights Commission

Halcrow

HITRANS

JMW Ltd

Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS)

Mobility Choice (re Mobility Roadshow Scotland)

NESTRAN

Network Rail

Reid-Howie Associates

Scottish Executive (various departments)

Scottish Parliament (committees and cross party groups)

Scottish Transport Studies Group

SESTRAN

TACTRAN

Transport Initiatives Edinburgh (tie Ltd)

Transport Research Institute, Napier University

UK Disability Forum for Europe

UPDATE

7. Finance

SATA's financial year runs from April to March.

Income

Income is mainly derived from annual subscriptions from individual and corporate members. This has significantly increased over the period and members are listed in Appendix A.

Other sources of income are bank interest and individual, corporate and trust donations. We acknowledge financial support from The Ian Mactaggart Trust and Halcrow. Applications for grants from the Scottish Executive and The Big Lottery have proved unsuccessful. Approaches to motor manufacturers and transport operators have yet to gain support.

Expenditure

SATA has no paid staff or office and so currently funds are only required to meet the expenses of office bearers and other members working in a voluntary capacity. Even so expenditure has exceeded income especially on travel.

Balance

For a second year a deficit has been incurred which has eaten into reserves and reduced the balance to an unsustainable low level. The situation was addressed in a Business Plan which set out SATA's key objectives and the resources needed to meet them. Work on this is ongoing and in the meantime measures are being taken to limit expenditure to a minimum.

An income and expenditure statement for the 12 months to March 2007 is shown in Appendix B.

8. Appreciation

The Office Bearers and Management Committee members record their appreciation of all who support SATA and contribute to its activities. They look forward to this continuing and developing in the coming year to strengthen the organisation and achieve its aims.

For copies of this report, to ask for it in different formats, or to make comments on it, please contact:

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Appendix A - Members

Corporate Members Aberdeen Action on Disability
Aberdeen Disability Action Ltd
Aberdeenshire Independent Travel Project
Angus Transport Forum
Arthritis Care in Scotland
Artlink Edinburgh
Badenoch & Strathspey Transport Company
Capability Scotland
Community Transport Association UK
Cumnock Doon Valley Access Panel
Deeside Access Panel
Democracy, Disability and Society Group
Disability Advisory Group, Aberdeen
Disability Shetland
Disability West Lothian
Disabled Persons Housing Service
Dumfries & Galloway Access Panel
Dumfries & Galloway Centre for Independent Living
Dumfries & Galloway Coalition of Disabled People
Dundee Accessible Transport Action Group (DATAG)
ECAS
ENABLE Scotland
Elap Engineering Ltd
Fife Council Transportation Service
Fife Independent Disability Network
First ScotRail Ltd
Forum on Discrimination, Edinburgh
Glasgow Access Panel
Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living
Gordon Disability Action
GNER
Handicabs (Lothian)
Help the Aged (Scotland)
Highland Council, TEC Services, Inverness
Highlands & Islands Equality Forum (HIEF)
Inclusion Scotland
Inverclyde Council on Disability
Journeyplan Ltd

Leonard Cheshire
Lochaber Action on Disability
Lochaber Disability Access Panel
Lochaber Transport Forum
London Taxis International Vehicles Ltd
Lothian Community Transport Services
National Federation for the Blind
North Lanarkshire Disability Forum
Northlink Ferries
Orkney Disability Forum
PAMIS
Prestonfield Neighbourhood Project
RADAR
Scottish Council on Deafness
Scottish Disability Equality Forum
South Edinburgh Amenities Group (SEAG)
Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT)
TRANSform Scotland
Visibility
West Dunbartonshire Access Panel
West Dunbartonshire Partnership (WDCPP)
WRVS

Individual Ballantine, John
Members Campbell, Jean
Cross, Paul
Flett, Stanley
Gilroy, Douglas (Hon. Life Member)
Goodall, Jan
Greener, Jennifer
Ingram-Monk, Peter
Killin, Maggie
MacDonald, Mina
Patullo, Thomas
Rees, Alan, MBE
Ritchie, James
Robinson, Terry
Sim, Ruth
Williams, Muriel (Hon. Life Member)

**Appendix B - Income and Expenditure Statement
for the year to 31st March 2007**

Balance at 1 st April 2006	£	£
		1,492.72
Income		
Subscriptions	1,040.00	
Contributions	200.00	
Bank Interest	8.53	1,248.53
Expenditure		
Travel	724.00	
Printing & Stationery	434.93	
Telephone & Postage	223.66	
Subscriptions	30.00	
Meetings	424.62	
Computer Services	523.91	2,361.12
Balance at 31 st March 2007		<u>380.13</u>

Represented by:

Bank account	476.22
Uncashed cheques	96.09
	<u>£380.13</u>

Prepared by Peter Ingram-Monk
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**For details about SATA
Including meeting dates, proceedings, links and how to join,
Visit our website ~**

www.scottishaccessibletransport.org

