

**SATA**

**Scottish Accessible Transport Alliance**

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**Scottish Charity No SCO27600**

**Working Together on  
Transport Issues**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**2007-8**

# **Scottish Accessible Transport Alliance (SATA)**

## **Annual Report 2007-8**

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### **1. Introduction**

SATA is an unincorporated association registered as a charity in Scotland founded in 1995. It brings together 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 18<sup>th</sup> September 2008.

### **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. The total number of members at 31st March 2008 was 68, comprising 50 corporate bodies and 18 individuals. These are listed in the Appendix.

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 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, an open meeting took place at Clyebank College on 14th November, a members' meeting at Camelon, Falkirk on 4th February, a further open meeting in

Perth on 15th May and a members' meeting will be held in Camelon following the AGM on 18<sup>th</sup> September.

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

**November:** Muriel Williams on the TRANSED international conference in Canada

**February:** Mhari Rodger on the work of the Forth Valley Sensory Centre

**May:** Dr Sarah Wixey of JMP Consultants on the EU research project 'Improving Public Transport Accessibility for Disabled People'.

The presentation at the **September** meeting will be given by Doug Fleming of Stagecoach.

#### **4. Management Committee and Office Bearers**

SATA is governed by an annually elected Management Committee acting as trustees and it met on the dates given above.

At the AGM in September 2007, Stanley Flett, Maggie Killin, Alan Rees were elected respectively as Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Secretary/Treasurer.

The following were elected as Committee Members: John Ballantine, Paul Cross, Bob Edwards, Douglas Gilroy, Pat McGuigan, Jackie Maceira, Jim Ritchie, Terry Robinson and Muriel Williams.

#### **5. Business**

The following matters were considered during the year:

##### **Scottish Parliament**

SATA members became intensively involved in a lobby to prevent the Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland from being dissolved as part of the new Scottish Government's 'bonfire of quangos' announced by the First Minister on 30th January 2008. It was proposed that the Public Transport Users' Committee (PTUC), which had been set up in 2007, should take over its functions with a slightly enlarged membership. A Briefing Note and other papers were widely circulated and, supported by Inclusion Scotland and the

Scottish Disability Equality Forum, a submission was made to the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee as the lead committee considering the two Scottish Statutory Instruments giving effect to the proposal. In the event the Committee voted 5 to 3 for the Parliament to take no action and the proposal was dropped. MACS is now to be revived with new members and hopefully they will get the full support they need to move the right transport policies forward and work closely with PTUC through their shared government secretariat.

The Parliament's Equal Opportunities Committee continued to monitor the impact of its report 'Removing Barriers and Creating Opportunities' produced in March 2007 which made 27 recommendations on transport. As we reported last year 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 involved in the strategic development, design, implementation and monitoring of transport services.

Following a period of consultation, Jackie Bailie MSP introduced her Disabled Persons' Parking Places (Scotland) Bill on 2nd June 2008 and it is now being considered by the Local Government and Communities Committee. SATA members support the provisions of the bill.

### **Transport Scotland**

Representatives of the 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 Travel**

The Scotland-wide free bus scheme for older and disabled people started in April 2006 and is administered by Transport Scotland. The number of entitlement card holders now stands at over 1,100,000 and the number of journeys taken has risen to over 222,600,000. However SATA expressed concerns that many people who are considered disabled under the DDA nevertheless did not meet the scheme's eligibility criteria. Furthermore, many who are eligible cannot benefit from the scheme because many buses and coaches are still inaccessible for a variety of reasons or services are just not available for them to use, especially in rural areas. A review of the scheme

in now underway and as a result we hope the eligibility criteria will be extended and community transport services included.

### **Transport Services and Strategies**

As a result of a 'concordat' between the new Scottish Government and COSLA, responsibility for the funding of services, including public transport, has passed from central to local government within a set of broad national outcomes, indicators and targets and a 'Single Outcome Agreement' (SOA) for each authority to take account of local priorities. This has enhanced the role of local government but with the level of central government funding described as 'tough' and the freezing of council tax rates, together with the absence of 'ring-fencing', many local and national services have since come under threat or been cut back, including voluntary and community services. Local and regional transport strategies have had to be re-assessed.

### **Department for Transport**

SATA has responded to a number of consultation documents from the Department for Transport:

- the introduction of EU Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations from July 2008
- a revised Code of Practice on Train and Station Design for Disabled People
- Guidance for Train and Station Operators on the Writing of Disabled Persons Protection Policies (to be renamed)

SATA also considered proposals for radical changes to the Blue Badge Scheme in England and Wales but did not respond pending consultation by the Scottish Government.

### **Disability Rights and Transport**

From 4<sup>th</sup> December 2006 the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 came into force for public authorities, including local authorities, health authorities and regional transport partnerships to have a general duty to promote disability equality and encourage participation (the Disability Equality Duty). Many public authorities also have a 'specific duty' - an additional obligation to demonstrate how they are working to end unlawful discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity under a Disability Equality Scheme.

SATA has worked with the Disability Rights Commission in Scotland to bring the Specific Duty to the notice of Regional Transport Partnerships and has been invited by some RTPs and local authorities to comment on their strategies. However more needs to be done to monitor what is happening and we look to the DRC's successor, the Equality and Human Rights Commission, to increase the pressure on public authorities to meet their obligations.

The EHRC/DRC has a series of guides to avoiding discrimination in transport including for buses and scheduled coaches, rail services, and taxi and private hire services, as well as a general Transport Code of Practice (visit the website [www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com) to download copies).

### **Transport Services**

During the year, members of the Management Committee decided to form themselves into six sub-groups to consider issues concerned with transport services and where necessary consult with members. These were under the following headings:

#### **(1) Air services**

As reported last year SATA responded positively to the 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.

#### **(2) Bus and coach services**

The national Scotland-wide concession travel scheme has benefited many older and disabled people but has excluded others because of the absence of accessible services. At the February meeting in Clydebank, John Finlay from Transport Scotland attended to up-date members on how the scheme was going and to answer questions. Some of these were about the eligibility criteria: others were about the problems posed for blind people by the electronic card scanners being fitted over the next 12-18 months. There was also the need for better on-vehicle audio and visual information and improvements at terminals and stops.

### **(3) Rail services**

Representatives of First ScotRail, Network Rail, GNER, National Express East Coast and Transport Scotland have attended meetings and reported on developments. Members were regularly up-dated on projects funded under the 'Access for All' programme and other improvements at stations such as lifts and step-free access, REACT signage, tactile maps, variable height counters, customer information systems and help points.

More rail network responsibilities are now devolved to Scotland and Transport Scotland, acting jointly with the Department for Transport, consulted on a revision of the UK Code of Practice on train and station design first published by the Strategic Rail Authority in 2002. The consultation was prompted by the need to align the existing rules with new European rules applying to stations on the Trans-European network coming into force in 2008.

Comments were submitted to First ScotRail during the annual revision of its Disabled Persons' Protection Policy (DPPP) and to the Department for Transport on its draft Guidance for Train and Station Operators on the writing of DPPPs.

At the invitation of Halrow on behalf of the UK-wide watchdog 'Passenger Focus', SATA members took part in a 'Mystery Shopping' exercise by travelling on First ScotRail services. The results are not yet to hand.

It was noted in May that the Scottish Government had extended the First ScotRail franchise to 2014 in return for a £70m investment in additional services. Meanwhile Audit Scotland invited stakeholders to comment on its performance.

### **(4) Sea/Ferry services**

SATA members have expressed concerns about limitations on access to small ferries, hovercraft and seaplane services. The Scottish Parliament's Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee has conducted a review of ferry services and MACS submitted evidence highlighting some of the problems faced by disabled people particularly those living in the northern and western isles.

### **(5) Car, door-to-door travel and community transport**

A review of the Blue Badge scheme in England and Wales has already been

noted and also Jackie Bailie's bill in the Scottish Parliament to tighten up the enforcement of parking regulations.

Funding pressures on local door-to-door and community transport services have already been mentioned. It was noted that MACS had stressed the vital importance of these services if the mobility of disabled and older people was to be improved. It had also undertaken a survey of 'taxicard' concession schemes in operation in Scotland and, although some of the data provided was incomplete, a very patchy and variable provision was highlighted.

### **(6) Transport policy, information and the environment**

Transport Scotland has been undertaking an audit of the trunk road network to meet its duties under the Disability Equality Duty and SATA has been represented on its focus group.

The British Waterways Board in Scotland has been doing a similar audit on access to Scotland's canals and SATA has been represented on a focus group.

### **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)

Bus and Coach Watchdog

Department for Transport

Derek Haldane Consultancy

Describe Online

Dial-a-Journey, Stirling

Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC)

Equality & Human Rights Commissions/Disability Rights Commission, Scotland

Halcrow

HITRANS

JMP Ltd

Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS)

Mobility Choice (re Mobility Roadshow Scotland)

NESTRAN

Network Rail

Passenger Focus

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  
Transport Scotland  
UK Disability Forum for Europe  
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## **7. Finance**

SATA's financial year runs from April to March.

### **Receipts**

Income is mainly derived from annual subscriptions from individual and corporate members. This has continued to increase over the period and members are listed in the Appendix.

Other sources of income are bank interest and individual, corporate and trust donations. We acknowledge financial support from the Disability Rights Commission and Passenger Focus.

### **Payments**

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.

### **Balance**

Over the financial year receipts exceeded payments by £666 leaving a balance of £1,142. This compared to a balance of £476 at the start of the year. A Business Plan sets 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 increase membership income further.

A separate Financial Statement for the 12 months to March 2007 is available.

## **8. Appreciation**

The Office Bearers and Management Committee members record their appreciation to 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.

Members warmly congratulate Muriel Williams on becoming a Member of the Order of St John (MStJ) earlier this year. Muriel is a SATA Honorary Life Member, a former Chairperson and current Management Committee Member. She is Chair of Handicabs (Lothian) and active on many other bodies.

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

**Alan Rees MBE**  
**Secretary, SATA**  
**20 Seaforth Drive**  
**Edinburgh EH4 2BZ**

**Tel: 0131 315 3006**

**E-mail: [at.rees@sol.co.uk](mailto:at.rees@sol.co.uk)**

**August 2008**

## **Appendix - Members**

**Corporate Members**

- Aberdeen Action on Disability
- Aberdeen City Council
- Angus Transport Forum
- Arthritis Care in Scotland
- Badenoch & Strathspey Transport Company
- Community Transport Association UK
- Cumnock Doon Valley Access Panel
- Deeside Access Panel
- Democracy, Disability and Society Group
- Disability West Lothian
- Dumfries & Galloway Coalition of Disabled People
- Dundee Accessible Transport Action Group (DATAG)
- ECAS

ENABLE Scotland  
Elap Engineering Ltd  
Fair Deal  
Fife Council Transportation Service  
First Aberdeen  
First ScotRail Ltd  
Glasgow Access Panel  
Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living  
GNER  
Halcrow  
Handicabs (Lothian)  
Help the Aged (Scotland)  
Highland Council, TEC Services, Inverness  
Inclusion Scotland  
Inverclyde Council on Disability  
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  
Oban & District Access Panel  
PAMIS  
Prestonfield Neighbourhood Project  
Quarriers  
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** Carswell, Sylvia

Cross, Paul  
Flett, Stanley  
Gilroy, Douglas (Hon. Life Member)  
Gilroy, Margaret  
Goodall, Jan  
Ingram-Monk, Peter  
Killin, Maggie  
Logan, Mac  
MacDonald, Mina  
Meighan, Ruth  
Patullo, Thomas  
Rees, Alan, MBE  
Ritchie, James  
Robinson, Terry  
Sim, Ruth  
Williams, Muriel, MStJ (Hon. Life Member)

**For details about SATA  
Including meeting dates, proceedings, links and how to join,  
Visit our website ~**

**[www.scottishaccessibletransport.org](http://www.scottishaccessibletransport.org)**