

Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS)

Work Plan: April 2024 to end of March 2025

The Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS) is an advisory non-departmental public body. Within the founding legislation, Scottish Ministers have defined the overall aim for MACS as follows:

“MACS will consider such matters relating to the needs of disabled persons in connection with transport as the Committee think appropriate and give advice to Scottish Ministers”.

MACS Vision

"MACS believes in a Scotland without the barriers that isolate and exclude disabled people from making their choice of successful door to door journeys"

In achieving our vision, the Convener aims to ensure, that MACS' policies and actions support the wider strategic policies of Scottish Ministers. This is supported by the Framework Document between MACS and Transport Scotland (TS), our Sponsors.

MACS Strategic Remit is:

- To give Scottish Ministers advice on aspects of policy, legislation and practice affecting the travel needs of disabled people.
- To take account of the broad views and lived experiences of disabled people when giving advice.
- To encourage awareness amongst disabled people in Scotland of developments which affects their mobility, choices and opportunities.
- To work closely with SG and ensure our work programme complements the work being undertaken by the Inclusive Mobility and Transport Committee (IMTAC), the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC), the Scottish Human Rights Commission, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and other organisations, voluntary and statutory.
- To promote the travel needs of disabled people with designers including transport planners and operators so that these are fully taken into account in the development of vehicles and infrastructure and delivery of services.
- To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of our work against the above aims and objectives in improving travel opportunities for disabled people in Scotland.

MACS Objectives

This work plan sets out an overview of the work that the Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland plans to do from April 2024 – end March 2025 in pursuit of its five high level objectives:

Objective One: To build on the commitment in Programme for Government (PfG) to promote a fair, accessible and inclusive Scotland.

Objective Two: To work across Cabinet and Ministerial portfolios to ensure the need for an accessible transport system is recognised and cited as an enabler.

Objective Three: To ensure that the Scottish Government makes it clear that public bodies and local authorities have a duty to respect the legislation regulating improvements of the accessibility of public transport service provision and the surrounding infrastructures.

Objective Four: To advocate for engagement with MACS when developing or revising policy, plans or contracts by officials to gain expert advice and ensure accessibility is given a priority consideration. This includes using procurement and franchise opportunities when awarding contracts to promote accessibility in transport provisions.

Objective Five: To advocate for an effective and inclusive “just transition” in our review of the National Transport Strategy, the Accessible Travel Framework and supporting strategic plans and route maps. Our reviews will acknowledge progress, identify barriers and gaps and make recommendations to assist with the delivery of these commitments as we make transport more accessible and sustainable.

MACS Objectives have been derived from our overarching [Strategic Plan](#).

How MACS will deliver

To deliver on our strategic remit and progress our objectives, we will continue to revise the MACS workstreams for clearer alignment with our priorities. This has been further supported by the identification of MACS members as 'Champions' or 'Specialist Advisers' for specific topics that we anticipate Transport Scotland or the wider Scottish Government will require advice or support on in the year ahead.

To support delivery of the MACS Workplan the Committee is subdivided into five workstreams (Ferries and Aviation; Public and Community Transport; Rail; Active Travel and Infrastructure; and Planning, Strategy and Engagement) who will progress a number of thematic activities and engagements, whilst retaining the flexibility to react to emerging opportunities. These activities, overseen by Workstream Leads, will be matched against the above high-level objectives and will report quarterly on progress via workstream reports produced by each lead.

The activities of all workstreams and areas of engagement will support the wider Ministerial objectives and influence and/or inform the four pillars of the NTS with an emphasis on Reducing Inequalities.

The following themes are by no means exhaustive, the consultation on the Islands Connectivity Plan, the Learning Disabilities, Autism, and Neurodivergence Bill, and the UKG Call for Evidence on passengers' accessibility needs in taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (PHVs) are examples of known engagement not yet quantified.

Work Plan by Key Themes

When progressing our objectives, we will ensure alignment of priorities with the First Minister's policy prospectus (Equality, Opportunity, Community – New Leadership, Fresh Start) linking our work and engagements to support the wider Ministerial objectives, coupled with the transport elements of Programme for Government and Bute House Agreement.

Closing the Mobility Gap

We will continue to engage and provide advice to inform delivery of the National Transport Strategy (NTS) and the commitment to reduce kilometres travelled by car by 20% by 2030, (recognising there is no one-size-fits-all solution), the Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR), the National Performance Framework, National Planning Framework (NPF), the successor to the previous Transport Equalities Network, the Accessible Travel Framework (ATF), and ensuring disabled people are not designed out of Low Emission Zones.

Ensuring a Just Transition

MACS recognises that disabled people are disproportionately impacted by climate change. We will engage with officials and the Just Transition Commission to ensure the transport needs of disabled people are mainstreamed in policy decisions.

Active Travel

We will advocate to make active travel work for disabled people, including through engagements and the provision of advice to Transport Scotland's Active Travel team

and contributions to the Active Travel Transformation Fund and projects. We will promote the need for improvements in pedestrian infrastructure as walking and wheeling are the most common active travel activity including in the first and last mile of journeys. These activities support and align with the Sustainable Transport Hierarchy.

Motability and AVES

With a focus on Value for Money from Motability Operations and the SG Accessible Vehicle and Equipment Scheme (AVES) we will build on an opportunity that now exists to influence policy in this space. MACS welcomes new providers in Scotland, our aim is to also advocate for the creation of a Scottish Motability User Group.

Transport to Health and Social Care

We will monitor the progress of the National Transport to Healthcare Delivery Plan through bi-annual meetings with the SG Primary Care Team leading on the delivery of the 16 commitments from the plan.

Innovation and technology supporting accessible public transport system

We will look for specific initiatives under Demand Responsive Transport or Mobility as a Service. We will explore policy initiatives and opportunities for engagement with local authorities and Regional Transport Partners on concessionary travel (linked to the Fair Fares Review) including travel by Tram, by Rail now that ScotRail is under public ownership, by Ferry, and by Community Transport in the absence of accessible bus services. Travel by Tram, Rail and Community Transport can be more accessible than bus but not affordable to many.

Scottish Human Rights Bill

We will progress this area through engagement as members of the Wider Implementation Working Group aimed at supporting the development of the Human Rights Bill.

The National Islands Plan, Islands Connectivity Plan, and the emerging Rural Development Plan

In collaboration with ferry, aviation and rural stakeholders, we will seek opportunities to engage with island and rural communities to inform and give advice in the development of the National Islands Plan, Islands Connectivity Plan, the Rural Development Plan and in the work to develop a modern and sustainable ferry service in Scotland.

Operational

In 2024 there will be a focus on our organisational structure and resources. We will review, with Transport Scotland, the Framework Agreement, which lays the base for the working arrangements and support mechanisms between MACS, the Sponsor Team and the Secretariat.

We will strengthen our focus on members' development to enhance the skills of the Committee, the technology needed to best support our work and to foster greater collaboration, share knowledge, and manage information.

We will continue to engage across Scottish Government, UK Government and the devolved nations alongside continued working with partners to ensure that the Committees advice draws on knowledge and expertise from across the third sector, local authorities, businesses and community groups.

We will ensure a seamless and timely handover of board convenership by 31 December 2024.

Workstreams for 2024 – 2025

- Ferries and Aviation (Lead: AM)
- Public and Community Transport (Leads: LM/GD)
- Rail (Lead: SW)
- Active Travel and Infrastructure (Lead: SF)
- Planning, Strategy and Engagement (Leads: LP/EC)

Workstream Leads, and where required Specialist Advisers, will also meet regularly – utilising the scheduled PS&E with the Chair rotating as agreed by the Workstream Leads.

Champions and Specialist Advisers

- Scottish Human Rights Bill and EHRC — CB/LP
- Disabled People Organisations and Disability Organisations — LB
- Rural — LB/AM
- Transport to Health and Social Care — GD
- Motability and AVE Scheme — NA
- Inclusive Communication (encompassing written, digital inclusion and accessibility) and Disability Equality Training — LP
- Smart Ticketing — MT
- Travelling with assistance animals — MT