



**TRANSPORT  
SCOTLAND**  
CÒMHDHAIL ALBA

# **Disability Equality Scotland Accessible Travel Framework: Evaluation Research Project Report**

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## Executive summary

### Background

This review of the progress of the Accessible Travel Framework (ATF), was commissioned by Transport Scotland, and conducted between August 2022 and March 2023.

The ATF was originally published in 2016, with the framework based on consultation between key stakeholders, including disabled people, Disabled Peoples Organisation's (DPO), transport providers and Transport Scotland. The Framework was co-produced by the Accessible Travel Framework (ATS) Steering Group, with the purpose of supporting disabled people's rights by removing barriers and improving access to travel and ensuring disabled people are fully involved in work to improve all aspects of travel.

### Removing Barriers

Accessible travel can enable disabled people to enjoy equal access to full citizenship. Therefore, the original conversations held, were about identifying, and removing barriers which prevented disabled people travelling, or which served to make their journey an unpleasant experience. It was recognised that the project was about more than transport, and included access to vital services such as employment, education, and healthcare.

The role of this review was to:

1. develop an understanding of the monitoring and evaluation work of the ATF.
2. use the valuable feedback and data that DES gathered as evidence and a vital resource.
3. develop a richer and more up-to-date understanding of the priorities of disabled people traveling in Scotland currently.

4. reflect on how the work of the framework could be monitored in the future and consider how it is currently being monitored, evaluated, and reported on.

The review has been informed and guided, via active engagement and consultation, with both the team at Transport Scotland, and externally via a short life project working group.

Unashamedly, this review has used the lived experience and testimony of disabled people in Scotland, to consider the impact, priorities, and changes to experiences of travel in Scotland, through the implementation of the ATF.

## External impacts

This review acknowledges that the Covid-19 pandemic had - and continues to have - a profound and lasting impact on the aims and work packages relating to the ATF.

This is reflected in travel trends throughout the pandemic and indeed up until more recently, the Disability and Transport Survey shows that travel usage has not gone back to its pre-pandemic levels for disabled people traveling in Scotland (across all modes of transport).

It is also crucial to consider that there have been a variety of significant changes to the landscape of travel and transport since the ATF was first drafted and published in 2016, including: industrial action; a cost-of-living crisis; and staff shortages. Some of these recent shifts in the social landscape are reflected in the recent National Transport Strategy 2 (2020).

Additionally, it should be realised that disabled persons' Human Rights - with specificity to accessibility, though also more broadly - is made complex by the shared legislative environment of Scotland's position within the United Kingdom.

## Recommendations

It is proposed that this review's recommendations be considered in preparation for Transport Scotland's next delivery plan.

A summary of the key recommendations arising from the Accessible Travel Framework, Evaluation Research Project (2023), are contained in an appendix to this paper.

However, there are some general, thematic topics airing out of these recommendations, including:

## Consultation and data

The review found that there was a general lack of information available concerning the ATF for it to consider. Therefore, there is a need to improve the quantity, quality, timing, and scheduling of data collection within the area of disabled travel.

Any information gathered should directly relate to indicators of progress of the ATF and should be both quantitative and qualitative in nature – and to include a lived experience perspective.

## Future planning

There have been a number of consultation respondents identifying that future annual Transport Scotland delivery plans should distribute priorities and actions equally across all six areas of the ATF.

These future priorities and actions should link clearly to the original areas identified in the ATF to enable effective monitoring. Future delivery plans should have a clear set of indicators – based on a SMART objectives approach - and be communicated publicly.

## Stakeholders

The review recognises that Transport Scotland cannot deliver the ATF in isolation and must work in partnership with a variety of stakeholders.

Therefore, co-production, consultation, and open dialogue between Transport Scotland, transport providers, and DPOs should be conducted throughout the creation of the delivery plan, identification of the key performance indicators (KPI's) and the process of delivery.

## Communication

In order to further support disabled people, the ATF should prioritise inclusive communication for all delivery projects and look to extend support to transport providers in order to provide inclusive formats for transport-related communication surveys.

Additionally, the Accessible Travel Hub should be used and enhanced as a central resource for disabled people and a point of contact.

## Training and development

Consultation feedback has identified that all members of customer-facing transport staff working within accessible travel should receive disability equality training, delivered by disabled people. This training should be further cascaded to additional members of staff supporting those in customer-facing roles.

This would support the continuation of improvement to passenger assistance services across all modes of transport.

## Emerging/Future priorities

The review has also recognised emerging issues associated with transport, in particular: active and sustainable travel; and clear pathways.

There are additional issues – whilst not necessarily new – are certainly becoming more relevant, including accessible taxi services.

## Accessible Travel Framework progression

The recommendations contained in this review aim to provide proposals and guidance on how to move forwards with the work of the ATF in closing the mobility gap and working towards accessible transport for all.

The review raised concerns about some of the potential risks which need to be considered throughout the remaining lifespan of the ATF including:

- Continued gaps in knowledge and understanding through failure to achieve concordance with transport providers.
- Length of time taken to effect changes across larger stakeholders.
- Staff lacking knowledge or authority to accommodate or make reasonable adjustment.
- Failure to collaborate systematically.
- Failure of accountability mechanisms.

Overall, there is a need for a shift in approach and language of project documents, moving away from progress or completion, to progress and on-going development/continuation, in consultation with disabled people and DPOs.

Providing accessible travel to all disabled people across Scotland and continuously working collaboratively on this aim will be an on-going body of work. The aim of project documents such as the ATF should be to guide, augment and provide markers for the direction of this on-going work.

This shift in ethos will be paramount to the development of the new ATF and other project documents moving forward within the work of closing the mobility gap in Scotland.

## **Lived experience and independence**

Finally, one of the original purposes of the ATF was to “support disabled people’s rights by removing barriers and improving access to travel.”

Consultation participants have reinforced that travel accessibility to them is about choice. Therefore, moving forward, offering disabled people as much choice as possible - to ensure they can participate as it suits them - would allow for further autonomy within the experience of travel.

Transport services, travel support and assistance which allow individual disabled people to travel independently - without the need for a companion, or without having to notify members of staff – would be viewed as a true success for the ATF and a significant improvement for disabled people.



## Summary of key findings

The following reflect the key findings that have emerged from the ATF Evaluation Research Project: 2016 to 2023; commissioned by Transport Scotland and conducted by Disability Equality Scotland.

The key findings reflect the main contents of the report and are subsequently supported by a number of key recommendations and are presented in no particular order of importance:

- Feedback has suggested that there has been a failure to collaborate systematically concerning the ATF and a failure of accountability mechanisms.
- The review recognises that there have been a number of confounding variables in relation to the implementation of the ATF and to transport in Scotland more generally – particularly over recent years.
- The review also recognises that ‘transport’ encompasses a wide expanse of integrated components, including (though not exclusively): Clear Pathways; Hate Crime; Journeying between different modes of transport; and Journey Planning. Although relatively easy to approach the development of such examples in isolation, the reality for the disabled person is that these components are very often inter-linked.
- The review found that there was a general lack of information available concerning the ATF for it to collate and consider. Therefore, there is a need to improve the quantity, quality, timing, and scheduling of data collection (both quantitative and qualitative) within the area of disabled travel.
- Overall, there is evidence to reflect that some progress has been made concerning elements of the ATF priority actions put forward in the last five years. Whether there is a causal relationship between this progress and the ATF is questionable. It is proposed that on the evidence available, overall progress of accessible travel for disabled people has been challenging to fully identify.
- It is recognised that developments have been made in recent years to improve the experience of accessing transport services - however it is acknowledged that passenger assistance and staff training remain vital to be carried forward and enhanced further.
- Although sporadic at present, all members of transport staff working within accessible travel should receive disability equality training.
- It has been identified that historic Transport Scotland delivery plans have not distributed priorities and actions equally across all areas of the ATF.

- In order to further support disabled people, the ATF should prioritise inclusive communication for all delivery projects – including those delivered by stakeholders.
- There is a need for a shift in approach and language of project documents, moving away from progress or completion, to progress and on-going development/continuation, in consultation with disabled people and DPOs.
- The Accessible Travel Hub should be utilised and enhanced as a central resource for disabled people.
- The review has also recognised emerging issues associated with transport, in particular:
  - Active and sustainable travel.
  - Clear pathways.
- Evidence has suggested that there is an observed length of time taken to effect changes across larger stakeholders.
- Previous regional engagement exercises, and feedback opportunities are perceived as vital to implementing progress of the ATF.
- Provision should be made to adequately store the data collected and reported upon within this report.
- In association with the creation of future delivery plans, Transport Scotland should engage in a series of co-production activities, to create progress indicators for the actions within each new ATF priority.

## Summary of key recommendations

The following are the key recommendations arising from the findings from the ATF Evaluation Research Project (2016 to 2023), commissioned by Transport Scotland and conducted by Disability Equality Scotland:

1. Improve the quantity and quality of data collected in relation to disabled passenger experiences by capturing relevant and specific information which directly relates to indicators of progress for the priority areas in the Accessible Travel Framework and/or any future delivery plan(s).

This could include:

- To ensure future Disability and Transport Household annual surveys include specific questions relating to any future delivery plan(s).
  - To create a bi-annual, annual, or biennial travel experience survey for disabled people in Scotland, in conjunction with strategic partners and from a lived experience perspective.
  - To support transport providers to collect their data in a way that enables measures of progress to be seen between disabled and non-disabled people's experiences.
  - To encourage engagement between transport providers and Disabled Peoples Organisations to create feedback mechanisms that are both inclusive and accessible.
  - To consider how passenger/customer satisfaction could be tracked via passenger assistance apps.
  - To map all channels of data gathering from external stakeholders and internal processes to maintain an archive of the Accessible Travel Framework and related work.
2. Ensure co-production, consultation, and open dialogue between Transport Scotland, transport providers, and DPOs is conducted throughout the creation of any future delivery plan(s). Quantitative and qualitative key progress indicators should take a SMART objectives approach and involved lived experience.

This could include:

- To consider the re-establishment of the Accessible Travel Regional Action Forum events, to regularly consult disabled people across different regions in Scotland, for the remaining lifespan of the framework.
- To create a workstream plan for identified priorities and share with stakeholder organisations working in alignment with the Accessible Travel Framework, for annual progress reporting.

- To map clear links between original areas identified in the Accessible Travel Framework and current/future project plans to enable effective monitoring, ensuring equal distribution across all areas.
  - To create opportunities for transport provider accessibility teams to share knowledge, experiences and to problem solve arising issues.
3. Support all transport modes to continue to improve passenger assistance services, and to clearly signpost and communicate these services to passengers, including Thistle Assistance.
  4. Development of a rural “Accessible Taxi Services” plan across Scotland to address specific barriers disabled people face when trying to access taxis. In conjunction with a collaboration between Community Transport Association and Disability Equality Scotland, this can be expanded to work towards mitigating transportation issues arising for disabled people in rural communities.
  5. Ensure that all members of staff working within accessible travel receive disability and equality training, delivered by disabled people, which includes all transport providers.
  6. Prioritise inclusive communication for all delivery projects.
    - To provide support to transport providers to be inclusive with their forms of transport information.
    - To unify all accessible and inclusive travel information and resources by creating a good practice guide which can be held as a central resource and point of contact on the Accessible Travel Hub.
    - To gather specific best practice guidance and case studies of arising issues within transport, in conjunction with disabled people’s organisations to be shared on the Accessible Travel Hub.

## Introduction

The Accessible Travel Framework (ATF) – entitled “Going Further” - was developed by Transport Scotland in 2016, from conversations between disabled people, their representatives and people who work in transport across Scotland with the purpose of:

- supporting disabled people’s rights by removing barriers and improving access to travel, and;
- ensuring disabled people are fully involved in work to improve all aspects of travel.

Accessible travel can enable people to enjoy equal access to full citizenship. The conversations originally held, were about identifying, and removing disabling barriers which prevent people travelling, or serve to make their journey an unpleasant experience. It was recognised that the project was about more than transport, and included access to vital services such as employment, education, and healthcare.

The ATF provided a national vision and outcomes for accessible travel and a high-level action plan to tackle the key issues facing disabled people. Its vision was that:

*“All disabled people can travel with the same freedom, choice, dignity and opportunity as other citizens.”*

This original vision was supported by four outcomes:

1. more disabled people make successful door-to-door journeys, more often.
2. disabled people are more involved in the design, development and improvement of transport policies, services, and infrastructure.
3. everyone involved in delivering transport information, services and infrastructure will help to enable disabled people to travel, and;
4. disabled people feel comfortable and safe using public transport – this includes being free from hate crime, bullying and harassment when travelling.

In 2022, Disability Equality Scotland (DES) was approached by Transport Scotland to conduct a review of the impact of the ATF. This review has been commissioned as part of a research and evaluation project funded by Transport Scotland, to monitor the progress of the ATF and its priorities.

The role of the review was:

- To develop an understanding of the monitoring and evaluation work of the ATF.
- To use the valuable feedback and data that DES gathered frequently from our membership base as evidence and a vital resource.
- To develop a richer and more up-to-date understanding of the priorities of disabled people traveling in Scotland currently and;
- To reflect on how the work of the framework could be monitored in the future and consider how it is currently being monitored, evaluated, and reported on.

Disability Equality Scotland has – wherever possible – used information and ‘lived experience’ testimony from disabled people in the production of this review - which contributes to our continued advocacy for accessible travel for disabled people.

Ensuring that the current experience of disabled people in Scotland is at the forefront of each stage of the ATF’s implementation, planning and reflection, this report draws on testimonial data, project reports and data made available by Transport Scotland. The project has been guided via active engagement and consultation both within the team at Transport Scotland, and externally via a short life project working group which contained representatives from Transport Scotland, the Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS) and Disability Equality Scotland.

The research for this review was conducted from August 2022 to March 2023 and was informed by data gathered from the Transport Scotland project archives within Disability Equality Scotland, information provided by Transport Scotland, information provided by disabled people in Scotland, and from external sources of data, such as the Disability & Transport; Scottish Household Survey report (2021).

We can also see that this is a time of change and development for the ATF’s delivery plan structure, as we have now reached a pivotal moment, with only three years left in the original framework’s lifespan, as the ATF concludes in 2026.

The stated aims of this review were:

- To use the lived experience testimonies of disabled people in Scotland, to consider potential impacts, priorities, and changes to experiences of travel in Scotland.
- To collate qualitative data from disabled people in Scotland in relation to their experiences of transport.
- To consider how the ATF has been initiated and developed, since its publication in 2016.

- To collect recent data that relates to the priorities of the ATF, where possible highlighting what could be developed further based on that data. Where needed the report shows gaps and recommendations on how to develop the monitoring and evaluation work.

Due to the scope of the project, this report does not cover every mode of transport and every identified priority, or work stream, within the span of the ATF. Instead, it took its lead from Transport Scotland's Annual Delivery Plans and their outlined priorities published in 2019 and in 2021, and also the topics and issues that have been continuously raised in recent years by disabled people.

## Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic

This report acknowledges that the Covid-19 pandemic had - and continues to have - a profound and lasting impact on the aims and work packages relating to the ATF.

This is reflected in travel trends throughout the pandemic and indeed up until more recently. The Disability and Transport Survey shows that travel usage has not gone back to its pre-pandemic levels for disabled people traveling in Scotland (across all modes of transport).

Some of the lasting effects of the pandemic on the experiences of transport and travel in Scotland for disabled people have been:

- Discrepancies in information.
- Lack of up-to-date information and.
- Cancellations/delays to services.

All of these have been raised in multiple different engagement exercises throughout the pandemic, including the most recent poll series on accessible travel and modes of communication. These negative impacts on travel experiences have led to a lack of confidence and an impact on trust in transport and travel.

It is also crucial to consider that there have been a variety of significant changes to the landscape of travel and transport since the ATF was first drafted and published in 2016, including: industrial actions; a cost-of-living crisis; and staff shortages. Some of these recent shifts in the social landscape are reflected in the recent National Transport Strategy 2 (NTS2) which was published in 2020.

As the priorities of the ATF shift and grow and new delivery plan models are developed there needs to be conscious consideration and prioritising of the development of accessible, active, and sustainable travel, and clear projects and action plans put in place to ensure the priorities of the NTS2, and the ATF align and support one another – whilst placing the disabled individuals needs at the centre of any decision making.

## Methodology

This report was conducted through desk-based research.

The report primarily drew from internal project documents from DES document archives, and through project documents from Transport Scotland, including delivery plans, preparatory documents, progress reports, stakeholder engagement exercises and transport provider data.

The report used publicly available data such as the Disability and Transport Survey, Scottish Household Survey, Bus, and Rail Passenger Experience Survey from Transport Scotland, etc.

The report also utilised DES Weekly Poll archive, webinar reports, and previous reports and project documents pertaining to the ATF. These were all vital sources of information throughout the development of this report.

Through immersion in and analysis of the weekly poll data, members surveys, webinars and webinar reports, the report took this predominantly qualitative data collected from DES's membership base and positioned this data in relation to the indicators set out in the original ATF, Transport Scotland's goals and indicators set out in their annual delivery plans, and also the quantitative data gathered through Transport Focus and other annual data collection points.

By looking at these two datasets together and considering the project plans, work packages, and goals laid out in the ATF the report then summarised some of the key findings from this research process, and presented a series of recommendations which put forward suggestions on monitors and indicators which could be put in place, beneficial projects which could be funded, and approaches to and prioritisation of areas of the ATF which are priority issues for disabled people travelling in Scotland currently.

Using lived experience data from the DES membership, specifically analysing the weekly poll data from 2023 back to its initiation 2020.

The report also conducted some data collection exercises including a four-part series via the DES Weekly Polls, these surveys were voluntary and anonymous, and were circulated to DES's membership base in October and November 2022. This series focused on access to information and experiences of communication in relation to travel across various modes of transport. As early analysis of the components of the ATF's 48 issues showed that information access and channels of communication were found to be two of the most pressing areas which needed to be developed across all modes of transport in order to meet many of the goals of the ATF.



The data from this weekly poll series was collated into a report which was shared with our members via the DES website. Following a thematic analysis to explore the trends from this dataset, a series of values were created based on these findings and these have gone on to inform the recommendations to develop qualitative indicators for all work packages and priority areas being carried forward to the end of the ATF's lifespan and beyond.

As part of this project a webinar looking at the future of the ATF's priorities was hosted by DES, in collaboration with Transport Scotland in February 2023. The testimonials and feedback gathered through this exercise were summarised into a report made available to the DES membership. The webinar report also informed this report and its recommendations.

The report took a thematic analysis approach to analysing trends in the datasets from lived experience testimonials in DES Weekly Polls and the emerging thematic trends were then used to propose qualitative progress indicators. The trends indicate specific values which disabled people hold when it comes to their travel experiences. (For more see Qualitative Progress Indicators)

The recommendations from this report are informed by and reflect the lived experiences of DES's membership. These have been reflected upon throughout the research process, and the voices of disabled people have been used to inform the reasoning behind, alongside considering the original ATFs indicator and monitoring structure previously implemented.

The recommendations of this report aim to provide suggestions and guidance on how to move forwards with the work of the ATF in closing the mobility gap and working towards accessible transport for all. Supporting this work by advising the implementation of projects, indicators, and reporting/monitoring supporting systems which will support Transport Scotland in collaboration with many actively involved stakeholders such as DES and MACS, to collectively deliver these priority actions. With input and guidance from disabled people in Scotland, working towards ensuring safe, accessible, and inclusive travel for all.

## Accessible Travel Framework background

The ATF was published in 2016. The framework was based on consultation and conversation between key stakeholders, including disabled people in Scotland, organisations who work with and advocate for the rights of disabled people in Scotland, Transport providers and Transport Scotland. The Framework was co-produced by the ATS.

The framework's priorities are upheld, and its issues worked towards by Transport Scotland alongside other key stakeholders such as the Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland, DES and many more organisations. For further information see: [Accessible Travel Framework - Accessible Travel Hub](#)

The ATS Group includes organisations of and for disabled people, transport service providers, local government, and Transport Scotland. They were to meet quarterly to hold a discussion about how best to implement, monitor and adapt the ATF.

The event report findings voiced concerns about some of the potential risks which need to be considered throughout the lifespan of the framework.

Identified risks:

- “Continued gaps in knowledge and understanding through failure to achieve concordance with Transport Providers
- Length of time taken to effect changes across larger stakeholders
- Staff lacking knowledge or authority to accommodate or make reasonable adjustment.
- Failure to collaborate systematically.
- Failure of accountability mechanisms”

We can see from the concerns above and from issues raised more recently via feedback at webinars and via weekly polls, that many respondents did not know what was being done towards the goals of the framework. Examples found in the Accessible Travel weekly poll series conducted in late 2022.

Further to this, many respondents raised issues with lack of knowledge and understanding from staff more generally. This was also raised as a vital issue in the Discussing the Future of the ATF webinar hosted in February 2023.

Many attendees raised concerns that whilst positive changes can be seen in journey planning, in preparatory stages of travel and more in-depth up to date training and

services are being offered across some transport modes, many respondents raised that they were experiencing issues during the journey itself, coming up against barriers when staff are not aware of services offered or how to provide important support and passenger assistance.

Within the framework itself the steering group is referred to as a point of conversation which facilitates collaboration between key stakeholders and companies who provided support services for disabled people in Scotland.

It is vital to the work of the framework that all these stakeholders have regular facilitated space to communicate, update, and develop solutions to the identified priorities of accessible travel in Scotland, which is a shared goal for all stakeholders involved, and the ATS group, supported by Transport Scotland, is a vital component of facilitating conversations and collectively guiding and contributing to the work of the ATF.

This Steering Group was also put in place as a way of problem-solving the concerns raised about knowledge gaps and the need to facilitate collective action.

The framework states that:

*“Part of the work of the organisations participating on the Steering Group will be to ensure that their members are kept informed about the action plan and given a voice on transport issues right back to the centre of government”*

Throughout the monitoring and evaluation section of the ATF primarily covered in Part six and seven of the document, we can see that the steering group’s role was to provide collective conversation and guidance which would support in both the delivery of these outcomes but also as one of the key methods of overseeing and implementing some of the qualitative progress indicators and evaluation monitors.

## Accessible Travel Framework outcomes

There are four identified outcomes to the Accessible Travel Framework:

**Outcome 1:** More disabled people make successful door-to-door journeys, more often. This outcome is about helping all disabled people use the transport system in its broadest sense, as often as they want to.

**Outcome 2:** Disabled people are more involved in the design, development and improvement of transport policies, services, and infrastructure. This outcome is about the rights of disabled people to be, and the necessity of disabled people being, involved in all aspects of transport to show what works for them.

**Outcome 3:** Everyone involved in delivering transport information, services and infrastructure will help to enable disabled people to travel. This outcome is about the importance of ensuring people working at all levels of the transport system can understand the needs and wishes of different people with different support needs. This includes needs arising from mobility, sensory and cognitive impairments, mental health problems and other often hidden disabilities.

**Outcome 4:** Disabled people feel comfortable and safe using public transport – this includes being free from hate crime, bullying and harassment when travelling. This outcome is about the experiences of disabled people during journeys – making sure people don't feel anxious, confused, or worried, and that disabled people aren't subject to abuse or mistreatment including hate crime.

All of these outcomes work towards the overarching vision of the document which is that all disabled people can travel with freedom choice and dignity as other citizens.

As part of the implementation, monitoring and evaluation work of the ATF outlined in Part 6 and 7 of the document, a high-level action plan was put together outlining actions broken down in six key areas under three central themes.

## Theme 1 National guidance and standards

This theme focuses on creating guidance and information, outlining the best practices of providing accessible transport for disabled people and ensures the quality of accessible travel and transport.

**Area 1:** Developing principles and charters for travel accessibility across modes.

**Area 2:** Developing national guidance and good practice for accessible travel issues.

## Theme 2 Information and customer service

This theme focuses on improving access and availability of travel and transport information, ensuring inclusive and accessible forms of communication and information are provided and updated.

**Area 3:** Improving availability of accessible information to plan and make journeys.

**Area 4:** Enabling staff to support disabled people through awareness and training.

## Theme 3 Engagement and participation

This theme focuses on facilitating and incentivising engagement, collaboration, and participation from disabled people in the planning and implementation of impactful changes to travel services in Scotland.

Additionally, it looks at finding ways of facilitating and supporting co-production, a way of involving citizens, particularly those who may be affected by potential changes in the process of planning and implementing changes to public policies and services.

**Area 5:** Co-production of transport policy and practices

**Area 6:** Sharing experiences, feedback, knowledge, and learning.

## Discussion and recommendations

It is proposed that this report's recommendations be considered and reflected upon in preparation for Transport Scotland's future delivery plan.

Where possible, it is the report's aim that recommendations be taken forward and used in consultation exercises, discussions, and developed further into action plans, moving the ATF's evaluation, monitoring and delivery into its next phase.

These recommendations are based on the testimonial data of disabled people recently gathered, and also reflects on the positive systems of reporting and monitoring which have already been implemented, and on how these can be learned from and upheld for adaptive moving forward into this next phase of the ATF's lifespan.

It is important to note that the recommendations included within this report should be carried out throughout the remainder of the ATF's lifespan and potentially continued beyond into the development of a new strategy or framework from 2026 onwards.

It is also important to note these recommendations are not presented in order of priority.

## Recommendation 1: Evaluation and monitoring

It is proposed that Transport Scotland re-assess the existing data collection points put forward by the ATF in 2016.

Furthermore, it is proposed that Transport Scotland will ensure that data collection points for passenger experiences of disabled people using transport services in Scotland are still effective and collecting relevant and specific information which correlates with the priorities and work packages being currently pursued. This is in order that the collected data may be used to monitor progress in these areas and continue to be viable monitors as originally intended when the ATF was published.

The questions asked in the National Passenger Surveys should directly relate to indicators of progress put in place to monitor the development of priority areas pertaining to the ATF. This is something which this report has found to not always be upheld, with some of the original monitoring questions not being asked consistently each year, or not being asked in each region. As evidenced by the research in this report, the questions collected do not always correlate to a specific indicator of progress.

It is suggested that data gathered to monitor and measure this could come via apps, including having a section where disabled users can rate each experience. Data gathered could monitor the users' experience of their use of the assistance service.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that Transport Scotland and other key stakeholders work with Transport Focus to ensure that when data is collected, there is a separation of data so that it can be used as an effective measure of satisfaction/progress, and to ensure that questions asked for passenger surveys correlate to agreed indicators set out in the ATF and future delivery plans.

## Recommendation 2: Accessible Travel Regional Action Forum Events

Regional engagement exercises, and feedback opportunities are vital to implementing progress with the ATF's goals and upholding the frameworks ethos and vision.

The regional events summarised in the Accessible Travel Engagement Event 2016 report, are noted as a component of qualitative data gathering and a way of monitoring impact over time to individual regions.

Providing a follow-up to these events and gathering current feedback in order to do a comparative analysis with the 2016 event series will be vital in order to assess long-term impacts of the ATF in regions across Scotland.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended to follow up from the 'Accessible Travel Regional Action Forum Events' and undertake a series of consultation events across different regions in Scotland throughout the remaining lifespan of the current framework and that the comparative data be used in the final progress report at the end of the framework's lifespan.

This would be a beneficial and generative way of monitoring how priority areas pursued by Transport Scotland and other key stakeholders have impacted individuals across different regions of Scotland and in assessing how effective they have been.



## Recommendation 3: Best Practice Guidance Research Project.

It is proposed that Transport Scotland utilise existing channels of data collection and, working with these channels, to gather case study examples of best practice. This research project would similarly need to encompass data collection points with transport providers, gathering examples of best practice in implementing training.

This research project could culminate in a best practice guidance document, training programme, or series of resources, which could be used as a generic resource to support transport providers to deliver consistent, monitored, training for their staff.

A charter of best practice of training is an identified action within the original ATF, and this project could work towards progress in this area.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended to develop a project to gather specific best practice guidance and case studies of arising issues. This recommendation also intersects with gathering other priorities arising in bus, rail, and taxi staff training.

## Recommendation 4: Travel Experience Survey

It is proposed that Transport Scotland - along with key stakeholders and supported by transport providers - should investigate a biennial (every 2 years) travel experience survey for disabled people in Scotland, to publicise and raise the awareness of the survey in order to increase response rates.

As stated in the ATF, the two main processes of engagement for a transport experience survey would be:

- Results from bi-annual surveys open to all disabled people.
- Results from a longitudinal survey with a panel of disabled people.

The original annual ATF survey was discontinued in 2018, and it is suggested that a version of this survey be recommenced.

Example questions for an annual or biennial travel experience survey could include:

- How did you access this information?
- How did you find the experience of accessing this information?
- How confident were you when embarking on this journey?
- How confident do you feel to plan another journey?

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the implementation of progress indicators which measure improvements in this area become a priority for inclusion in the travel experience survey proposed - or included as poll questions to those with lived experience.

## Recommendation 5: Equal distribution of priorities across all six areas of the ATF

It is proposed that Transport Scotland's future delivery plans should distribute priorities and actions equally across all six areas of the ATF.

Considering this alongside the annual delivery plan priorities identified and worked on so far within its lifespan, it is recommended that alongside taking priorities forward, which focuses on the implementation of practical changes, it needs to balance these priorities with an equal weight with the consultation priorities ensuring that there is an even dispersal of resources across all three themes and six areas in the framework.

This report finds that Area 3 and Area 4 of the ATF have been prioritised in the first few years of the framework's lifespan, as we can see many priorities and work streams focusing on those areas.

While this has yielded some positive and impactful change across the span of the framework it is recommended that in order to uphold and work towards all key outcomes, Transport Scotland prioritise work across all six ATF Areas.

An example of this structure would encompass:

- a high-level priority, which would intersect key areas of the ATF and;
- actions within that priority would then reflect a specific mode of transport.

In this way progress can be marked towards each area of the ATF.

Within the original work stream documents, each work stream was related back to one or two of the six areas of the framework. This was a simple and efficient way to show the direct connections between the priorities/actions and the over-arching areas of the framework.

Report findings would indicate that by carrying forward at least one priority action in each of the six areas there would be a more consistent, interconnected and potentially effective delivery of priorities leading to greater progress and satisfaction rates.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that this be re-introduced and that all priorities be assigned to a specific area of the framework, so that it is clear and easy to assess whether all components of the framework are being carried forward.

## Recommendation 6: Continuation of the Disability and Transport Household Survey

It is recognised that the Disability and Transport Household Survey report has been vital to the completion of this research project and the drafting of this report.

It has been an important step to having relevant and up to date information about travel experiences for disabled people in Scotland and it is recommended that this becomes an annual or bi-annual published report.

By continuing to collect data (annually or biennially), it will become easier to track positive trends and impacts, specifically analysing these in relation to some of the goals within the more recent National Transport Strategy, the move from cars to public transport and the increased number of people making journeys by walking and wheeling.

### [National Transport Strategy 2](#)

A key outcome of this would be that Transport Scotland, alongside other key stakeholders would have regular data, which shows the impact of changes to accessible travel in Scotland and how these changes are affecting disabled people's experiences of travel.

Gathering this data annually will also be vital to monitor - not only for parts of the framework and its work packages - but to also charter the wider changes and trends in accessible travel experiences in Scotland. For example:

- Asking how up to date the timetables they use are?
- Have they recently used station support, and if yes how was this experience?
- Do passengers feel confident and safe using transport regularly?

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that some iteration of this annual/biennial survey is carried out, with specifically correlated questions which include monitoring for the priorities which will be carried forward in future delivery plans published by Transport Scotland.

It is further recommended that specific measures be put in place in the next Disability and Transport survey to ensure that specific indicators are created and implemented relating to their priorities.

## Recommendation 7: Collate and maintain a comprehensive archive of the ATF and related work.

As a component of the outcome of this project, provision must be made to adequately store the data collected and reported upon. It is also important to ensure that project plans, reports on ATF work packages, and documents from the history of the ATF are publicly available.

One solution to this may be to house this information on the current Accessible Travel Hub, and have this be a continually updated, living archive and resource of information pertaining to ATF actions.

If a comprehensive archive and system of reporting could be implemented - alongside key indicators assigned and adhered to - it would allow for an ease of updating data and reporting on progress on an annual/biennial basis. This would support the formative reporting and progress updates, which will be necessarily required as the ATF lifespan comes to a close in 2026.

It is fundamental to the overall success of the ATF project that the ATF outcomes and ATF-related research is compiled and archived, with the history of how this framework has been planned, managed, delivered, and most importantly experienced by disabled people.

Whilst supporting the final (summative) project evaluation, when the framework is concluded in 2026, it may also support and inform preparatory work being undertaken to work on the format and focus for the next iteration of the frameworks.

It is recognised that the retention and archiving of many of these reporting documents and system management processes would appear to have been negatively impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and additional internal factors within Transport Scotland – particularly the turnover of staff.

Through individual interviews, some of the early ATF driver maps and monitoring documents have been located and utilised within this report. However, it may be beneficial for further work be conducted to map a complete timeline of planning and reporting document creation.

It is suggested that by locating all 13 work stream driver maps originally created in collaboration with other key stakeholders involved in the Accessible Travel Steering Group, that these could be used as the basis for a reflection on progress made and a guide for moving forward.

### **Recommendation**

A key recommendation is to have a function in place which takes on the clear responsibility of managing and reporting on priority work streams and that this work be integrated within the archival research project.

This recommendation links with work to resolve the lack of data identified during this research. In essence, to prioritise the comprehensive archiving of the activity of the ATF and work achieved to date. This would contribute towards the mitigation of further data gaps.

## Recommendation 8: Develop a consistent set of progress indicators

This report proposes that a series of qualitative progress indicators be created as a lived-experience counterpart to the quantitative data already being gathered primarily from external sources. These indicators could be used as a simple metric in order to annually or biennially assess and evaluate the progress of each priority area.

Following this process, similar low-level indicators should be created. These should relate to each of the delivery priority actions which Transport Scotland aim to develop moving forward. This work will be vital to monitoring and upholding the actions and intentions of the ATF.

To make sure that priority actions are clear, and have measurable outcomes attached with specific measurable outcomes for each individual mode outlined, there should be both quantitative indicators of progress (gathered from channels as indicated in the original ATF), and qualitative indicators which employ some of the progress measures as suggested below (See Measures of Progress). Both should be gathered on an annual or biennial basis.

It is recommended that indicators of progress are based on experience metrics gathered from both qualitative and quantitative data, which are based on clear measurable goals which look at incremental improvement.

The progress indicators relating to each priority should also outline where that data is going to be gathered. This is something that can be created collaboratively in conversation with key stakeholders.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that one of the focuses moving forward is to develop a series of progress indicators and monitors, which can simply and effectively measure annual work progress as it develops.

It is recommended that these qualitative progress indicators be created as a set of tools which allow for clear evaluation of work undertaken by assessing it in the various components of the qualitative experience-led evaluation.

## Recommendation 9: Co-production of future Transport Scotland Delivery Plans

One of the proposals moving forward with the shift in focus for the Transport Scotland future delivery plans - as they now create a new mode of planning which spans until the end of the ATF's life span - is a series of co-production activities to create progress indicators for the actions within each new priority is recommended.

This report finds that regional engagement is vital, ensuring that not all consultation and co-production opportunities are online and create opportunities for all disabled people to share experiences, feedback and contribute to future planning outcomes.

Policy and strategy makers need to engage with regional issues and perspectives, and information needs to be captured regionally and locally with meaningful engagement and dialogue between those planning and implementing accessible travel policies and those who have lived experience as a disabled person travelling in Scotland.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that co-production, consultation, and open dialogue between Transport Scotland, transport providers, and DPOs is conducted throughout the process of putting together the delivery plan, the KPI's and the process of delivery. The co-production of subsequent delivery plans is vital to the progress and collective points of connection.



## Recommendation 10: Series of low-level action plans

The high-level action plan shown in Part 7 of the ATF needs to be prioritised, broken down and assigned for completion. This also needs to be monitored and reviewed regularly to ensure that they are contributing towards the achievement of the vision and outcomes.

As part of the format of the future delivery plan currently being developed, it is proposed that it draws on previous reporting systems and considers creating a workstream plan for identified priorities. This would potentially be a clearer way to report this information and to simply map progress based on in-built indicators. On the basis that this reporting structure was changed in order to develop the new structure of future delivery plans, it is recommended that a new iteration of the previous work stream and driver map format be undertaken.

The production of clear deliverables and low-level action plans should be transparent - with input from DPOs - and elements or summaries of action plans devised should be available to access publicly and inclusively.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that those delivering ATF work packages look towards implementing a work stream or driver map planning structure, which is shared with involved stakeholders who support on the delivery of these priorities.

## Recommendation 11: Clarity and consistency of language across delivery and project plans pertaining to the ATF

Within the original project documents each work stream was related back to one or two of the six areas of the framework. This was a simple and efficient way to show the direct connections between the priorities, or actions and the over-arching areas of the framework.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that this be reinstated and that all priorities be assigned to a specific area of the framework, so that is clear and easy to assess whether all components of the framework are being carried forward.

## Recommendation 12: Passenger experience data collected and categorised

It is proposed that Transport Scotland work with transport providers to support their ability to collect their data in a way which separates disabled people and non-disabled people's experiences, so that individual provider experience surveys can be used as further indicators and measures of progress across various intersecting priorities. These would include:

- passenger assistance.
- journey planning.
- staff training.
- hate crime.

Indicators for all these priorities could be connected to passenger surveys circulated by transport providers. This data needs to be separated into disabled people and non-disabled people user experiences, in order for this data to be used as a satisfaction measure for the ATF and for other work being conducted in this year.

It is proposed that this engagement with transport providers is pursued in the next phase of this project's development, working with them to develop ways of collecting customer experience data from disabled people.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that Transport Scotland work with transport providers to enable them to collect their data in a way which separates disabled people and non-disabled people's experiences, so that individual provider experience surveys can be used as further indicators and measures of progress across various intersecting priorities.

## Recommendation 13: SMART objectives and measures for future delivery plans

Transport Scotland require to make sure that priority actions are clear, and have measurable outcomes attached, with specific measurable outcomes for each of the individual modes outlined.

There should be both quantitative indicators of progress gathered from channels as indicated in the original ATF, and qualitative indicators which employ some of the progress measures as suggested below. Both should be gathered on either an annual or biennial basis.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that future delivery plans have a clear set of indicators outlined in the published document.

It is further recommended that the language of the priorities be clear and active and have a goal which can be monitored and assessed as complete if needed.

## Recommendation 14: Transport provider survey

It is proposed that Transport Scotland - as the monitoring and evaluating body - in collaboration with stakeholders, conduct an annual/biennial transport provider survey, which gathers data on:

- what services are offered/provided?
- how training is delivered?
- how frequently?
- how they provide information for journey planning?
- how they provide mechanisms of feedback in a range of inclusive formats?

This would be integral to creating an accurate progress report on each area of the framework as part of the frameworks reporting after the framework is concluded in 2026.

As an extension of this work, transport providers should be supported by Transport Scotland to work closely with DPOs to ensure that their feedback mechanisms such as passenger surveys and complaint procedures are available in a variety of inclusive formats and are accessible to all passengers.

As part of the wider recommendation to work towards a transport provider reporting mechanism and bi-annual survey some key indicators for developing this priority could be tracked as part of the survey, for example:

- Do operators feel confident in their passenger assistance training, their staff, and their capacity, to advertise and communicate these forms of assistance more widely?
- How do staff feel about the training they receive? And the experiences they have providing accessible services/supports to disabled people?

This information would help track the progress of the delivery of disability awareness training across providers. This data would also help disabled people feel more confident in knowing that assistance is available in these spaces and that it is regularly monitored.

The information could be generated via an annual data collection point, for transport providers to provide data on training, staffing, accessibility and inclusion improvements, services, and resources.

All transport operators and support services who conduct customer experience surveys and gather data on disabled people's experiences should be encouraged to participate. Such an agreed annual data collection system would be of great benefit to annual progress indicators moving forward.

**Recommendation**

It is recommended that Transport Scotland - as the monitoring and evaluating body - in collaboration with stakeholders, conduct an annual/biennial transport provider survey.

It is further recommended that Transport Scotland and stakeholders engage with transport providers about the best ways to gather up to date information regularly.

## Recommendation 15: Annual Reporting on All Projects Which Pertain to the ATF Priorities

All stakeholder organisations financially supported by Transport Scotland should work towards projects which align with the ATF and should report on work undertaken annually and feed this back to Transport Scotland.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that some qualitative user experience data is gathered from users of the Thistle Assistance card and other similar stakeholders (i.e. Neatebox).

## Recommendation 16: App User Data Gathering

It is proposed that Transport Scotland consider the effective utilisation of 'apps' to collect data regarding the passenger/customer experience and satisfaction. This should be considered in conjunction with the potential of data sharing across travel data hubs.

It is proposed that Transport Scotland consider:

- how passenger/customer satisfaction could be tracked via passenger assistance apps.
- whether this data could be collected after every user experience.
- looking at ways of engaging data sharing across data hubs (e.g., Traveline).

Additionally, Transport Scotland should ensure that these surveys are offered and marketed in a range of inclusive communication formats.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that Transport Scotland consider the effective utilisation of 'apps' to collect data regarding passenger/customer satisfaction, in conjunction with the potential of data sharing across travel data hubs.

## Recommendation 17: Timeline of data collection

Consideration should be given to develop a clear timeline which maps all channels of data gathering which feed into Transport Scotland from external stakeholders - who carry out work packages related to the ATF - and all Transport Scotland's internal data gathering pathways/processes.

This could be a component of the larger evaluation and monitoring recommendation.

### **Recommendation**

Transport Scotland to develop a clear timeline which maps all channels of data gathering which feed into Transport Scotland from external stakeholders, who carry out work packages related to the ATF, and all Transport Scotland's internal data gathering pathways/processes.

## Recommendation 18: Training for members of accessible policy and strategy staff

The report has identified a significant body of opinion from disabled people supporting the development of formalised training and development of staff working within accessible travel.

The training would strengthen staff member's understanding of a wide spectrum of disabilities - including invisible disabilities: neurodivergence, mental health, anxiety, ADHD, which are vitally important when implementing and delivering accessible travel policies.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that all members of staff working within accessible travel receive disability and equality awareness training, specifically from a lived-experience perspective.



## Recommendation 19: Prioritise an increase in inclusive communication format options

The provision of inclusive communication formats by Transport Scotland continues to be resolved by the on-going work with an independent DPO to:

- provide inclusive formatting of policy documents.
- support transport providers to provide inclusive formats for surveys, complaints, timetables.
- support the provision of all forms of transport information.

This could be supported further by incentivising transport providers to work with DPOs to:

- provide additional inclusive formats.
- frequently update these.
- ensure that the positioning of documentation in inclusive formats is publicised and made easily accessible.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that Transport Scotland include questioning concerning inclusive communication in annual transport provider monitoring (i.e., questions asking what form[s] of inclusive communication the provider offers).

## Recommendation 20: The Accessible Travel Hub

It is proposed to continue utilising the current Accessible Travel Hub as a resource and point of contact. This may mitigate many continuing issues raised pertaining to disabled people feeling overwhelmed by:

- the quantity of information.
- different resources and.
- platforms of information.

To achieve this, Transport Scotland should work with transport providers and DPOs to assess the best ways of implementing more up to date information via the Accessible Travel Hub.

Potential indicators of progress could be the travel hub being used more frequently and transport providers offering more up to date information.

A further proposal would be to engage with transport providers regarding the ways in which they provide information and to support transport providers to consider best practices when offering inclusive formats of timetables and other travel information.

By implementing these changes and then monitoring them annually/biennially, it is proposed that an increased level of successful journeys and journey satisfaction would be reflected.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended to utilise and reinforce the current Accessible Travel Hub as a resource and point of contact.

## Recommendation 21: Prioritise bus improvements

Based on progress data we can see that there have been some positive changes in passenger assistance and in the increased satisfaction with the accessibility of rail services for disabled people.

### Recommendation

Based on this there are two recommendations:

1. To support rail provision to continue these accessible services, and clearly signpost and communicate these services to passengers. It would be beneficial to prioritise marketing and clearer communication about rail opportunities and services, incentivising an increased use in existing accessible rail services and travel be considered.
2. To prioritise developing other transport modes, where crucial issues have been raised - such as bus and taxi, and support with walking and wheeling.

## Recommendation 22: Bus progress indicators

It is proposed that annual or biennial training is carried out by transport providers, and that this is reported in an annual or bi-annual update survey. Ideally this would be reported across all bus service providers and bus station operators if this survey is to be repeated.

### Recommendation

It is recommended that the annual travel experience survey be used as a way of assessing progress for this priority from the perspective of disabled people.

One way that this could be developed is to bring the main national bus providers together in consultation with disabled people with a variety of different disabilities, to discuss what has worked to date and what more could be done.

Currently, there is a lack of consistency in travel experience - which is particularly evident in bus and rail.

## Recommendation 23: Bus staff training

Based on disabled people's experiences and expressed needs in bus travel recently gathered, it is recommended that Transport Scotland and other key stakeholders develop a staff data gathering exercise.

This could occur in the form of an annual/biennial transport provider survey, potentially combined with a consultation group between bus accessibility teams across different companies to share knowledge and experiences and problem solve arising issues.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that Transport Scotland and other key stakeholders develop a staff data gathering exercise and convene a consultation group between bus accessibility teams.

## Recommendation 24: Implementation clear pathways research project

'Clear pathways' has emerged as a vital part of the ATFs development and a priority issue for the majority of disabled people today. However, this was outside the scope of this project.

It is suggested that specific research into areas of the ATF which have a significant lack of data and progress is conducted in the next phase of this project.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended to research and explore options for clear pathways work packages and how these can interlink with other issues raised in the ATF and with newly arising priorities.

## Recommendation 25: Development of Thistle Assistance

As Thistle Assistance works towards new areas of their project which specifically target 'wayfinding' issues, a key objective moving forward may be to set up an active consultation group for disabled people who feed into the usability and the functionality of this app as it is being developed.

The VoyagAR app and online platform, could be a central way to support the addressing of this issue, raised within 'wayfinding' and 'journey planning'.

If Thistle Assistance is being taken forward as part of key objectives and actions within future delivery plans, it is recommended that the emphasis be moved away from awareness raising and put specifically into establishing communication, training and evaluation of transport operators and their front-facing staff on their knowledge and awareness of the Thistle Assistance card, and alongside other Passenger Assistance apps and services.

As Thistle Assistance work towards new areas of their project, which specifically target 'wayfinding' issues, key objectives in this area moving forward may be to set up an active consultation group for disabled people who feed into the usability and the functionality of this app as it is being developed. It is recommended that Transport Scotland support its development where possible.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended the continued work packages pertaining to Thistle Assistance be looked at in relation to 'journey planning' and 'wayfinding'.

## Recommendation 26: Delivery of passenger assistance services

It is proposed that Transport Scotland and involved stakeholders – including DPOs - work with passenger assistance services to implement training and awareness raising for staff and transport operators.

A clear measure of progress in this regard might be that consistent passenger assistance services are offered across bus and rail. This could be monitored through the annual reporting which transport providers are encouraged to undertake.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that Transport Scotland and involved stakeholders – including DPOs - work with passenger assistance services to implement training and awareness raising for staff and transport operators.

## Recommendation 27: Taxi and staff training best practice guideline project.

It is recommended that a priority action be to develop a project with DPOs, to gather specific best practice guidance and case studies of arising issues. This recommendation also intersects with gathering other priorities arising in both bus and rail staff training, and taxi staff as well.

Sharing good practice and collecting data with examples of successes can be really helpful for many key work packages relating to original issues raised within the ATF, which specifically articulate the need to share and compile best practice examples.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that a priority action be to develop a project with DPOs, to gather specific best practice guidance and case studies of arising issues. This recommendation also intersects with gathering other priorities arising in both bus and rail staff training, and taxi staff as well.

Transport Scotland should prioritise the development of rural accessible taxi services across Scotland & conduct a series of consultation exercises with disabled people across Scotland.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that rural accessible taxis be a focus moving forward, with a key aim being to increase the number of accessible taxi services in regions which currently record lower quantities of accessible vehicles.

It is further recommended that a series of consultation exercises are conducted in the next year to gather clear, up-to-date data information on what specific barriers disabled face when trying to access taxis (particularly in rural settings), and clear indicators and an action be put in place once the data has been collated.

## Recommendation 28: Prioritise co-production practices and opportunities

Develop a consultation and co-production priority which intersects with the growing interests and issues arising relating to the Sustainable and Active Travel Strategy.

## Recommendation 29: Recommended passenger assistance progress indicators

It is proposed that confidence and independence in making safe and easy journeys for disabled people become measures of progress in this priority and that annual measures which gather data that indicates reduced booking time for passenger assistance or the use of drop in assistance, removing barriers to independent travel are put in place.

Similarly looking at how confident disabled people feel using a passenger assistance app, or a using a phonenumber to book, in terms of assistance in removing barriers to independent travel should be considered.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that confidence and independence for disabled people become measures of progress through annual or biennial surveys.

## Recommendation 30: Unification of accessible and inclusive travel information and resources

It is proposed - whilst intersecting with 'journey planning' and 'wayfinding' - that Transport Scotland and involved stakeholders should communicate with and set up connections between the various different passenger assistance apps and services across different transport modes. In addition to the finding of ways of incentivising or planning to create some central guidance on their use and access, or to compile a comprehensive list of services and options - which allows for ease of use and planning.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that Transport Scotland set up connections between the various different passenger assistance apps and services across different transport modes.



## Recommendation 31: Prioritise inclusive and accessible active and sustainable travel

Some disabled people have noted that consideration and thoughtful inclusion of disabled people's voices and experiences in the active and sustainable travel strategies and plans moving forward, would be a positive indicator of progress, with reasonable adjustments put in place relating to active travel plan implementation and planning.

It is recognised that collaboration with the Community Transport Association (CTA) would be of benefit moving forward to mitigate against some of the issues arising from rural access to transport for the disabled.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that Inclusive and Accessible consultation and implementation of active and sustainable travel be made a priority moving forward.

## Framework monitoring and evaluation

This section highlights some of the key data collection, and monitoring work undertaken since 2016 as part of the ATF's work and based on the aims and ethos set forth in the ATF and also informed by the recent lived experience testimonies of disabled people in Scotland.

This section reflects on positive monitoring work which should be supported and continued in the remaining years of the ATF, and also some areas for further development within this area, where monitoring has not been so successfully implemented.

The ATF has both qualitative and quantitative indicators in place, as evidenced in Part six and seven of the framework.

The monitoring strategies put in place for the framework were based on existing survey data gathered annually, such as:

- Scottish Household Survey.
- Bus Passenger Survey.
- Rail Passenger Survey.
- Scottish Transport Statistics.
- Scottish Crime and Justice Survey.

The positives were that:

- a variety of existing annual surveys are in place, which evidences a pre-established baseline for the data.
- the surveys have captured a wide variety of different disabled people and their experiences of travel.
- the surveys captured data on usage and experience-focused questions as well.

This report also finds that there is a suggestion to use quantitative and qualitative indicators and implementing these survey monitors is a clear and effective method of assessing relevant progress as they relate to the work streams.

Some of the identified draw backs from these surveys are:

- inconsistencies in how often key questions are asked.
- in what regions these questions are asked.
- as well as with the recording of certain experience-based questions listed in the ATF outcome indicators section annually.

[Going Further: Scotland's Accessible Travel Framework](#) pp – 58

## Accessible Travel Engagement Events Report (2016)

This 2016 Accessible Travel Engagement Events report lists the following as additional progress monitoring:

Accessible Travel Plan National Survey: Which was described as an annual survey in which disabled people in Scotland will feel included in, and informed of, the national picture of accessible transport through survey participation and feedback.

The National Survey Accessible Information Disabled Passenger draft report from 2018 shows a decrease in the response rate of 200 participants in 2016 to 61 in 2018, indicating that the continuation of the survey was deemed to be unfeasible leading to the survey being discontinued.

[Accessible Travel Engagement Report June 2016 \(pdf\) \(accessibletravel.scot\)](#)

This had a detrimental impact on stakeholders' ability to gather substantial annual qualitative data on the lived experiences of travel from the perspective of disabled people, specifically in relation to key delivered priorities.

### Longitudinal study

This has been described as the process of engagement via tracking a group of volunteers through the lifespan of the ATF, to provide further insight into potential impacts and changes working towards the improvements of accessible travel in Scotland.

Notionally overseen by Transport Scotland/the Accessible Travel Steering Group, there was to be regular discussion and engagement events held throughout the country of the type held before publication of the ATF, supplemented by online surveys which would also inform the Steering Group's work.

Archival data reflects that the original intention was that the longitudinal study would continue over the lifespan of the ATF, to facilitate and sustain an on-going consultation between Transport Scotland and disabled people.

The Accessible Travel Engagement Event 2016 report states that DES was initially funded to initiate this study. As part of this DES set up the Longitudinal Progress Evaluation Group (LPEG) and sought input and engagement from Access Panels across Scotland.

This report finds that an aspect of this monitoring action was indeed carried forward in the form of a series of Accessible Travel Regional Action Forum Events, up until February 2020.

The aim of the LPEG group was to feedback as much information as possible about what is happening in local areas in relation to accessible travel, and in turn to gather information locally from disabled people and feed this back to Transport Scotland. The events show a clear individual and regional perspective on what their priorities were at the time, and solutions proposed. However, these events were not continued due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Collecting, collating, and promoting best practice examples is a vital action which needs to be carried forward within the on-going monitoring and evaluation work. This is a key action which goes across multiple areas of the framework's priorities, but it is most closely aligned to Area 2 of the framework (Area 2: Developing national guidance and good practice for accessible travel issues.).

## **National Baseline Survey (2017) and National Survey Accessible Information Disabled Passenger Results Report (2018)**

The National Baseline Survey (2017) can be used to map comparative changes in the landscape of accessible travel in Scotland. This review engages with this (2017) baseline data, alongside the second round of this data collected in a similar survey run by DES (2018).

This review looks at these as foundation project documents, alongside the recently published Disability and Transport Scottish Household Survey (2021).

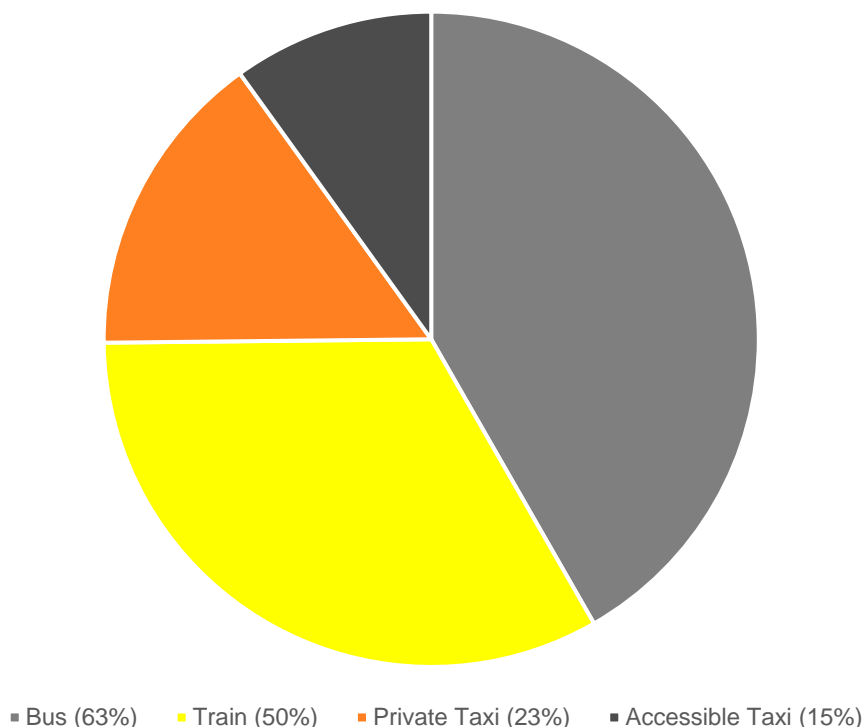
The National Baseline Survey data (2017) with disabled users of public transport, could be seen as the beginning of the ATF evaluation work packages. In total, 200 disabled people responded to the survey.

Below is an overview of some of the most relevant findings from the National Baseline Survey (2017).

Chart 1 (over the age) reflects the most common form of transport used by disabled passengers.

[National Baseline Survey Results - Disabled People.pdf](#)

**Chart 1: Most Common Forms of Transport Used By Disabled People**



\*Source: The National Baseline Survey with disabled users of public transport (2017).

The data is similar to the user statistics for disabled people travelling in Scotland in 2021.

The data similarly reflects that a relatively high percentage of disabled people travel by car (similar to the 2021 survey data), with car being the most used mode of transport when combining passenger and driver.

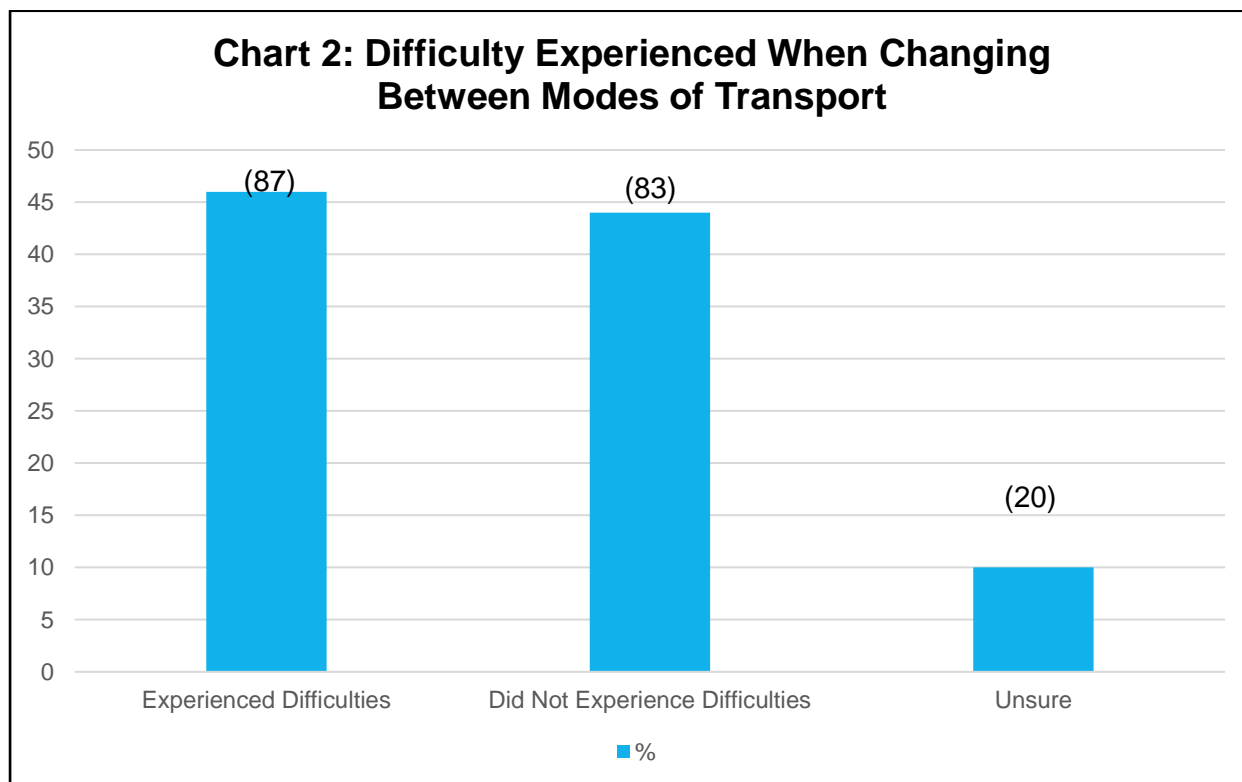
The 2021 household survey data also shows that the second most popular mode was walking/wheeling. However, the 2017 Baseline Survey does not include walking in their list of transport modes, so we cannot accurately compare data.

### Method of travel

Over a quarter of respondents (28%, 52 respondents) stated that they did not use private taxis as a regular mode of transport. Most also stated private hire vehicles were not wheelchair accessible, therefore preventing their use.

This is further reflected in the Disability and Transport Survey where taxi was under 10% of use across all areas of the household survey, indicating that disabled people still find taxis to be inaccessible in many instances.

The survey asked respondents to detail whether they had experienced any difficulties when changing between modes of transport (i.e., such as when changing platform at a train station or changing between bus and train).



\*Source: The Disability and Transport Survey National (190 respondents)

We can see from supporting testimonial evidence that changing between modes of transport is still an area which poses significant difficulty for many disabled people.

This was also raised in a dedicated online event and a specific poll for disabled people on the topic. This showed that ease of changing between modes was still seen as a key issue.

The most common reason given by those explaining their difficulties (93 respondents) was the distance between platforms, or bus terminals which often meant that they missed a connecting service because they could not physically get between the platforms quickly enough.

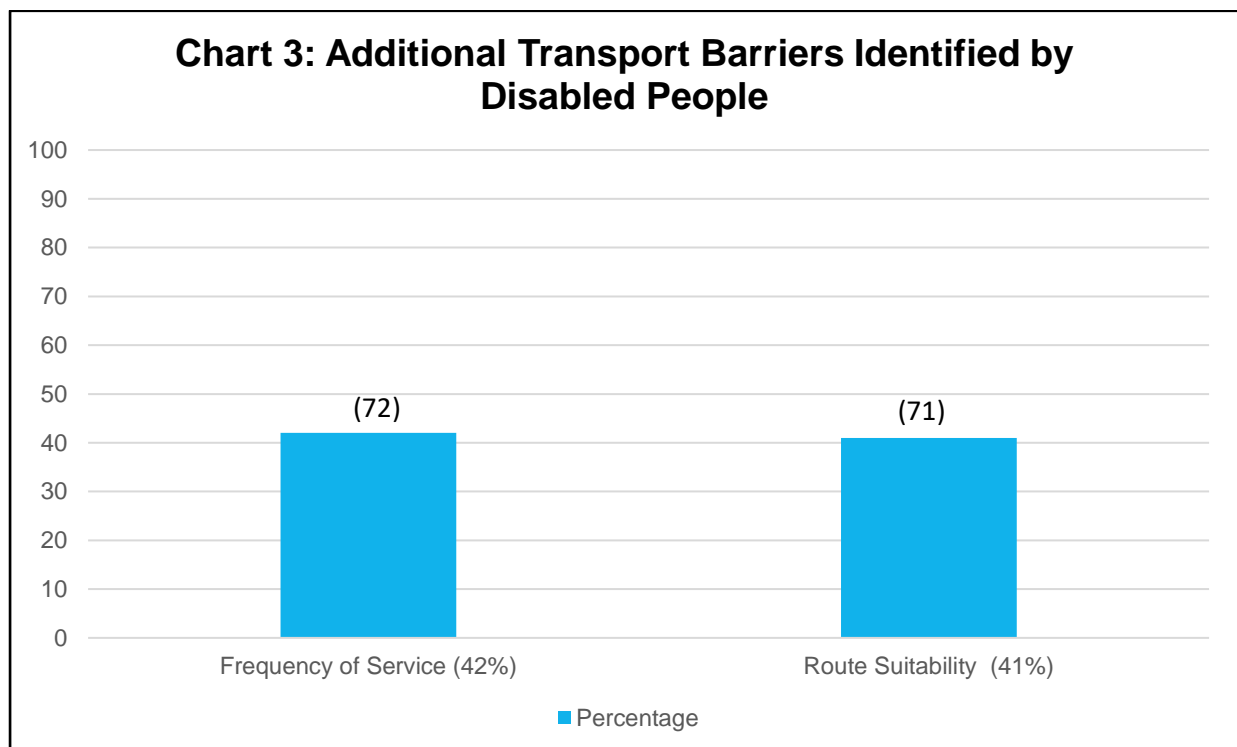
Other issues raised within the 2017 baseline survey were passenger assistance, and in particular issues with appropriate and effective passenger assistance being offered.

The survey collected information on the kinds of barriers that disabled people may face when using public transport. The most commonly cited was the accessibility of the mode of transport (49%, 84 respondents).

This has changed slightly, as we see in recent DES member surveys and through the data gathered in the Disability and Transport Survey, with safety and ease of access to transport changes and linkages as the main area of dissatisfaction.

This potentially indicates an increase in the accessibility of transport and resources that have taken place over the last four years. However, by gathering regular data sets this would provide clearer incremental evidence of this progress.

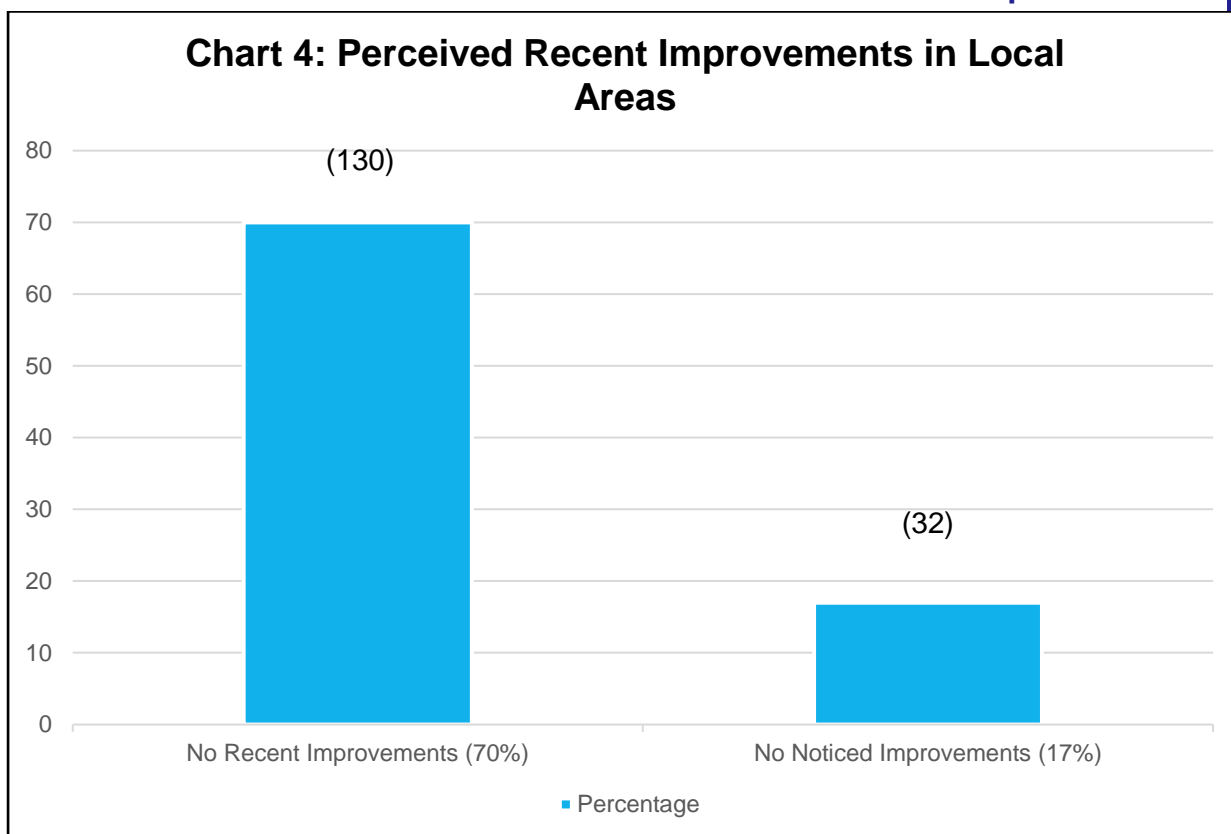
The chart below highlights additional transport barriers identified by disabled people:



\*Source: The National Baseline Survey with disabled users of public transport (2017).

This is similarly reflected in the inconsistencies and discrepancies with timetables and access to transport services that many disabled people experienced.

The baseline survey also asked respondents whether or not there had been recent improvements in their local areas:



\*Source: Accessible Information Disabled Passenger Results Report (2018)

The improvements noted by respondents included:

- improved attitude and behaviour of staff.
- introducing audio announcements on bus routes and.
- allowing scooters access to trams.

We can see that throughout the annual delivery plans published in 2019 and 2021, and through other internal reporting channels such as the Accessible Travel Steering Group documents, that these reporting channels all evidence progress, changes implemented and work across multiple areas of accessible travel.

However, through testimonial data gathered, (via polls and direct feedback as part of consultation activities), this reflects that most respondents have not experienced meaningful or large-scale improvements to their travel experiences.

The summary of the baseline survey comments that from various accounts, transport providers had not made, nor intended to make, any large-scale changes at this time. This indicates two parallel issues taking place.

[National Baseline Survey Results - Disabled People.pdf](#)



Firstly, that many of the changes being worked towards are not being consistently upheld and delivered by staff, or operators on the ground. A key issue raised during a dedicated online event, was that the barriers often begin at the point of embarking and during the journey itself. This happens more frequently than at the planning or booking stage.

Therefore, steps need to be put in place to support consistent and quality of delivery of the priorities which Transport Scotland and other key stakeholders have worked towards since the inception of the framework.

Secondly, it indicates that there are potential issues and gaps with how information is being gathered and the forms for feedback and consultation. These are recurring issues which can be seen throughout previous and existing evaluation measures in place.

The gap in reporting or evidence of a continuation of the original survey makes it difficult to accurately track the progress and impacts that the work streams have had on the travel experiences of disabled people in Scotland. Therefore, it is difficult to track progress from the perspective of the disabled consumer, as the data gathered is primarily data gathered from Transport Scotland and other delivering stakeholders.

The data collected, similarly showed that focus groups, and facilitated regular group discussions focussed on a particular topic were the most valued method for many of the respondents.

The Baseline 2017 survey also collected examples of best practice. The emphasis from this section of the 2017 data suggested that transport providers need to be encouraged and facilitated to meet with disabled people. More specifically that space and time for genuine practice of listening and engagement need to be implemented, whether this is supported by training, or by establishing regular points of contact directly with those experiencing these issues. Similar suggestions were raised in a recent data collection exercise via a DES poll.

This potentially shows that consultation and facilitation of communication and engagement has not been made a priority within the lifespan of the ATF's work packages to date.

Another area of data captured was responses to the question: "What changes to information would make the greatest difference to your ability to travel on public transport?" In response, many respondents articulated that accessible, clear, and up-to-date timetables would be crucial for progress in this area.

This was raised as a critical issue in a data gathering poll. It shows that this issue remains unresolved, and still a key priority and measure of a successful and

impactful change. Specifically, respondents commented on the need for further live updates at bus stops and online.

We can see from poll data and Transport Scotland's recent annual delivery plans, that some progress has been made in implementing this and that there are many more available apps, websites and mechanisms in place providing live update information - which is a successful sign of progress in some areas of accessible and available travel and journey planning information.

However, respondents noted that it is difficult to access up-to-date information, especially if you do not have access to the internet/Wi-Fi. Additionally, these websites and apps are not always accessible to a wide variety of disabled people who may have dyslexia, or visual impairments. Whilst positive progress has been made, which we can see has impacted the increase of journey satisfaction reflected in the Disability and Transport Survey (Findings from the Scottish Household Survey), nevertheless there are new issues arising which still echo the previous concern.

Indeed, when examining the baseline data established in 2017 - alongside more recent engagement exercises with disabled people - we can see that the core priorities from the perspective of disabled people have remained quite similar since the start of the ATF in 2017.

There are three strands to the factors relating to this. The first is that based on originally implemented changes and prioritised areas, issues have culminated in the same on-going priorities, but the actions and focuses within these will be different.

Many of the issues outlined in the ATF lack actionable wording, or specific measurable incremental outcome. This compounded with the lack of clear and incremental measures identified for priorities and issues, makes it difficult to ascertain progress or completion of whole issues, especially when issues require upkeep and continued work. This has resulted in issues being repeatedly raised and satisfaction rates staying approximately at same the levels.

The second is the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the long-term impacts of changes implemented in the first five years of the framework. There was an urgent need to reprioritise and focus on the short-term implementation of new regulations and supports for disabled people travelling in Scotland during the pandemic. The shifting landscapes within travel trends, transportation needs and priorities have been severely impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, by the cost-of-living crisis, the impacts of climate change, each of these global issues impacted disabled people's values and behaviours when it comes to using transportation services.

The third is that priorities pertaining to Area 5 and 6 of the ATF have not yet been highly prioritised in the actions of Transport Scotland and other delivery stakeholders. This is primarily due to the high demand for other issues to be resolved and due to capacity.

We can observe that connectivity between modes was not as high a priority issue in the baseline survey, and that this has increased as a priority over the course of the last four years. The baseline survey reflects that there were less available sources to access inclusive communication formats, and no available hub for travel information.

The creation of the Accessible Travel Hub alongside the development of various passenger assistance supports such as Thistle Assistance card and App, have been positive developments in the lifespan to date of the ATF.

In relation to the question regarding 'What changes to information would make the greatest difference to your ability to travel on public transport?' many of these key areas are recurring and are still raised in surveys and consultation events today. These could be summarised as:

## **Wheelchair accessible information**

Disabled people stated that useful information would be to know which buses have wheelchair accessibility, which trains have spaces, and how many spaces are available.

## **Up-to-date access guide**

There was another suggestion to have a 'one-stop-shop' for information including route planners on how to reach your destination, where to change, the accessibility of the station or stop, as well as information on parking spaces for blue badge holders.

## Connectivity

Other disabled passengers stated that their use of public transport could be improved by increased information on connectivity, and timetables that link to other services.

*“Better linked timetabling to different modes of transport.”*

*“More regular service as our local bus is hourly and the bus to Irvine is hourly, these arrive within ten minutes of each other.”*

The baseline survey stated that most respondents had not experienced any noticeable improvements to local transport services, it went on to comment - that from various accounts - transport providers had not made, nor intended to make, any largescale changes at this time. Very few disabled people had noticed improvements in their local transport services (17% said they had), which is not surprising, given more than half of transport providers said they had not made improvements, nor intended to.

However, we can see some meaningful changes in:

- the development of inclusive communication formats.
- passenger assistances forms provided and.
- increased satisfaction and usage of passenger assistance where it is available.

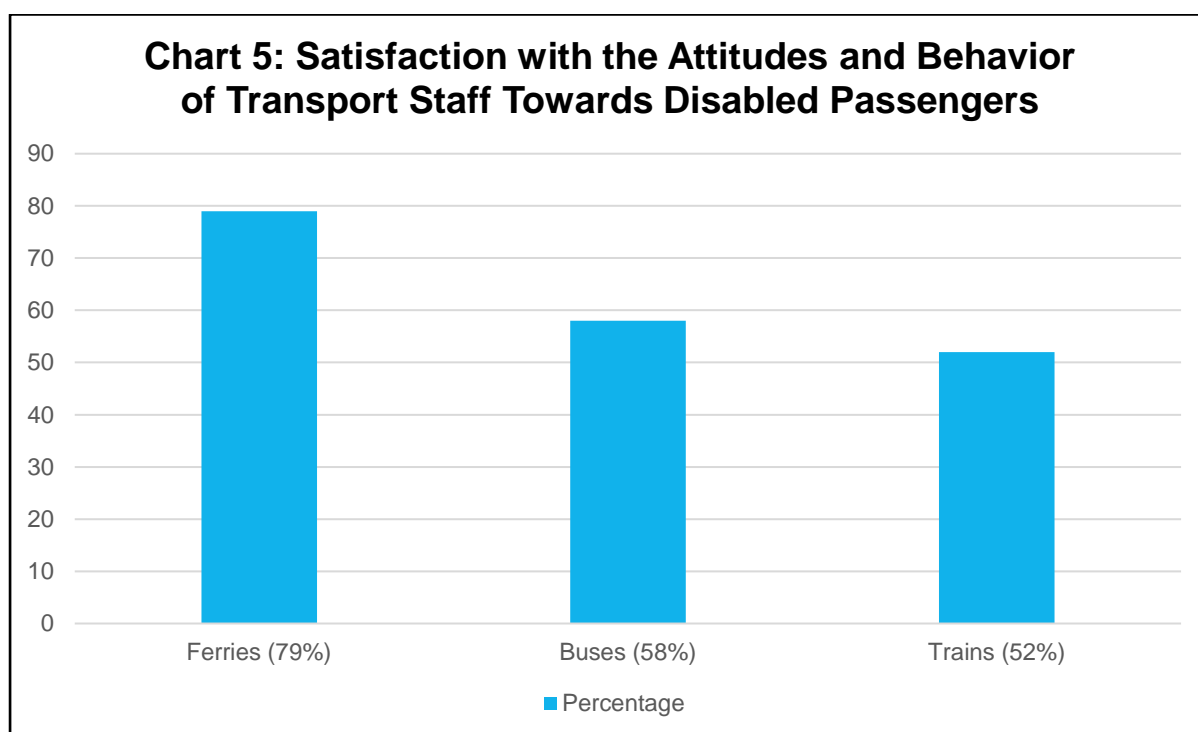
Recent priorities are more specifically about the improvement, amendment and additional provision of accessible support services and inclusive communication formats, whereas the baseline survey focuses on the implementation and initial provision of services. Potentially indicating a shift in priorities due to changing circumstances and implemented changes to accessible services.

We can surmise from looking at this alongside the key priorities raised in recent weekly poll data, webinars, and focus groups, that many of these are still on-going priorities, with issues being raised and requests for work in this area increasing since this survey was initially conducted in 2017.

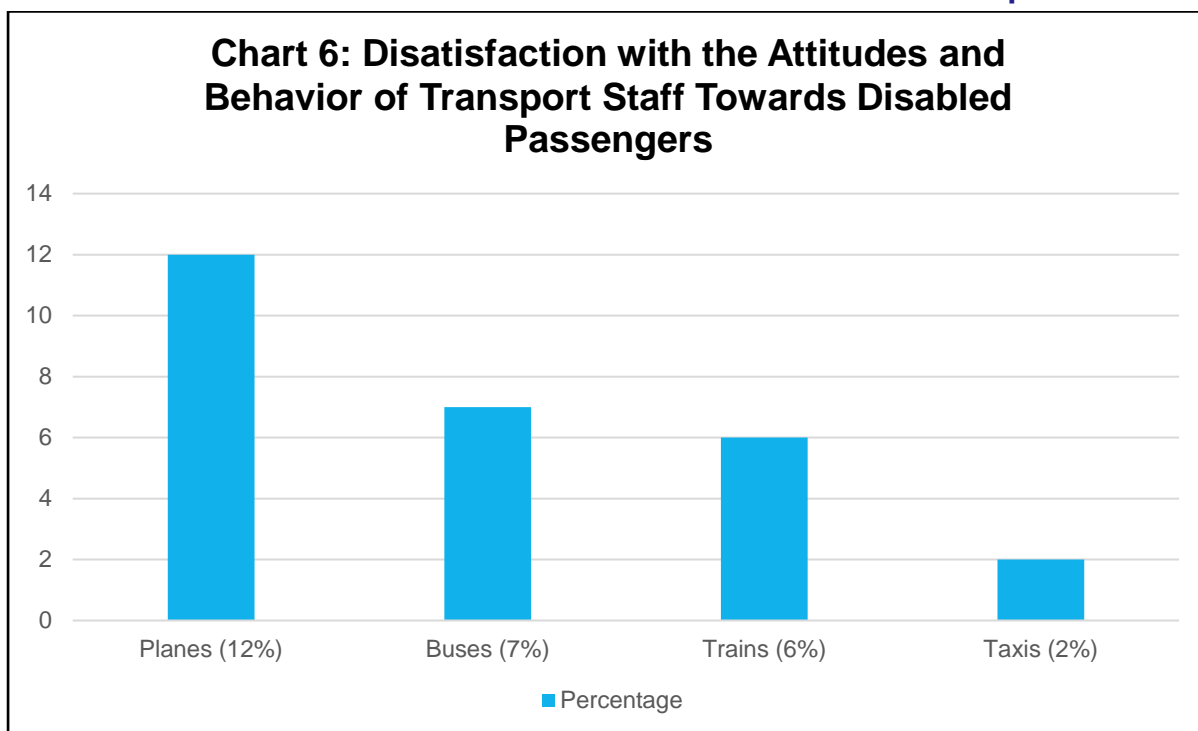
## National Survey Accessible Information Disabled Passenger Results Report

A similar survey was carried out in 2018; the “National Survey Accessible Information Disabled Passenger Results Report (Draft)” by DES. In total, 61 disabled people responded to the survey. The severe decrease in the response rate, was likely a contributing factor as to why the survey was not continued. The survey asked disabled people how satisfied they were with the attitudes and behaviour of transport staff towards disabled passengers on different modes of transport.

The following graphs represent the responses received:



\*Source: The “National Survey Accessible Information Disabled Passenger Results Draft Report” (April 2018).



\*Source: The National Survey Accessible Information Disabled Passenger Results Report (2018).

As the previous chart reflects, the highest levels of dissatisfaction were on planes - with 12% stating they were 'very dissatisfied' with the staff.

The survey asked about the accessibility of information and focused on route maps and signage. Most route maps were found to be inaccessible, and most respondents found signage to be accessible.

The survey found that signage to platforms (trains) was thought to be very accessible, (22%) or quite accessible (70%) as were visual display boards: 25% very accessible; and 61% quite accessible.

The 2018 survey shows:

- Respondents were asked what would make the most positive difference to them travelling on public transport. The two most common responses were step-free access to stations (35%) and to have staff trained in disability awareness (33%).
- The survey's questions and focuses were different from the previous baseline survey conducted which creates challenges when seeking to do a direct comparison.
- We can see that training is raised as a key issue, where previously the emphasis was on increased services, signage, timetables etc.

## Disability and Transport (Scottish Household Survey)

One of the key monitors for measuring successful developments relating to the outcomes of the ATF is the Scottish Household Survey. This is published annually, with a specific section focusing on the experience and use of transport modes and travel experiences.

In 2021, the “Disability and Transport: Findings from the Scottish Household Survey” report brought together important data which supported the monitoring of the mobility gap and assisted in the evaluation of how accessible travel is improving across all transport modes.

It also highlighted trends in the most frequently used transport by disabled people in Scotland and can show what transport modes may have a larger impact.

This is a positive development in the monitoring and evaluation work of the ATF, as this provides clear annual data which can be used to track developments in the experiences of travel of disabled people in Scotland.

If this iteration of the household survey could be continued on an annual basis, the data from this could be used to monitor how ATF actions have impacted disabled people, and also where the impact has not been as effective as planned.

The data collected compared specific travel patterns and usages between disabled people and non-disabled people.

The data shows that disabled people are less likely to drive, and slightly more likely to be a car or van passenger and to take a bus to work or to their destination. When disabled people are compared to those who are not disabled, they are less likely to drive (42% to 54%), and more likely to be a car or van passenger (18% to 12%), take the bus (11% to 7%), or walk (24% to 21%).

### [Disability and Transport: Findings from the Scottish Household Survey](#)

The data also shows that a lower percentage of journeys to work were undertaken by disabled people, and a greater percentage of journeys were to shops and access other key resources. <sup>1</sup> A smaller percentage of the journeys of disabled people were to work (12%, compared to 26% for those who are not disabled) and greater percentage of the journeys of disabled people were to the shops (32% compared to 21%).

For those whose disabilities reduced their ability to carry out day-to-day activities a lot, these discrepancies were greater (8% of journeys were to work and 35% to the shops), whereas those disabled people with no difficulty carrying out day-to-day activities, these figures were closer to those of people without a limiting condition (15% to work and 30% to the shops).

The data suggest that the emphasis on travel for disabled people is local journeys and short distance travel. Disabled adults had a shorter average (median) journey (3.2 km), than those who were not (4.5 km).

Those disabled people whose ability to carry out day-to-day activities was reduced a lot had a shorter median journey (2.9 km) than those whose ability to carry out activities was reduced a little (3.5 km).

With this data alongside testimonial data from members of DES, we can observe that short distance travel, and increased short routes to local resources is a top priority.

The household survey also shows that a greater proportion of disabled people's journeys are at off-peak times, and this is a priority time for increased services for disabled people. On weekdays a greater proportion of disabled people's journeys are in the middle of the day, and fewer before 9.30am and after 4.30pm. For those whose disability limits activities a lot, there is an even greater proportion of travel between 9:30 and 4:30.

The biggest difference in the views of disabled and non-disabled people focused on their experience feeling safe on public transport, and how easy they found it to change between modes of transport:

- 'Feel safe and secure on the bus at night', where 58% of disabled people agreed compared to 73% of non-disabled people.
- 'Easy to change from bus to other transport', where the figures were 65% and 77% respectively.

This showed that disabled people were not satisfied with their experiences in this area. With dissatisfaction with multi-modal travel increased slightly since the 2017 baseline

This reflects that a priority in improving the experience of travelling by bus, is to focus on multi-modal journeys and linkages between parts of the journey, with a focus on increased safety on buses.

The data also reflects that buses are utilised more by disabled people than rail services. With 45% using bus travel to 18% using rail travel.



This shows that increasing use of rail for disabled people is a priority, as many of the rail services and passenger assistance options for rail have a high satisfaction rate – with respondents to polling and online events noting some positive experiences of rail recently. This is reflected further in the high satisfaction rate of the Rail Passenger Survey.

However, this finding alongside other data in the summary shows that bus travel is often more suitable for the kinds of journeys many disabled people need to carry out on a frequent basis and so whilst supporting and incentivising the use of rail, it is equally crucial to find ways of improving new and existing bus services as well.

The Disability and Transport Household survey could be a vital tool for implementing clear indicators for progress for the implementation of many key priorities. Such as:

- ease of accessing information.
- experiences changing trains, or.
- making multi-modal journeys.

Those whose disability affected everyday activities significantly used the train less frequently than those whose activities were only affected to a lesser extent, with the number using the train in the past month 12% and 24% respectively.

When people who had used the train in the previous month were asked their views on rail services, disabled people were generally slightly less content than people who were not disabled, although differences were small for most areas. The area where the difference was highest was 'Feel safe and secure on the train at night', where 68% of disabled people agreed compared to 80% of non-disabled people.

This is similar to the responses on bus services views as well, which demonstrates that safety is still a significant concern for many disabled people using public transport.

As the Hate Crime Charter work package is developed further - and is implemented on many different transport modes - we can use this question as part of the household survey to monitor the impact this has had particularly on both bus and rail.

Overall, we see that satisfaction rates with public transport are moderately high, just slightly lower than average satisfaction rates for non-disabled people. 68% of disabled adults were very or fairly satisfied with public transport, compared to 70% of those who were not disabled. Of disabled people, those whose activities were reduced a lot were least satisfied (66% very or fairly satisfied), compared to 70% for people whose ability to carry out activities was reduced a little.

The 2021 survey also shows that there was a significant decline in disabled people flying in 2021. 29% of disabled people flew for leisure in the previous year, compared to 57% of the non-disabled population. Only 22% of people with a long-term condition that limited their day-to-day activities a lot flew, compared to 36% whose activities were limited a little.

For all limiting long-term conditions, flying for leisure was less frequent than for those with no limiting condition. Those with learning or behavioural problems (16%), a speech impairment (16%), mental health problems (17%) and difficulty seeing (18%) flew least.

This shows that support to facilitate ease and confidence in journeys from disabled people with these particular access requirements would be valuable in order to facilitate an increased number of disabled people feeling confident to fly.

This is due to many disabled people being reliant on public transport as a crucial method of accessing resources, going to work, meeting family and friends, accessing health care etc.

The increase in the distance of journeys evidence when comparing the 2017 Baseline Report and the 2021 Disability and Transport Report, could be seen as an increase in service access and quality of service issue, resulting in increased travel and confidence in undertaking longer journeys - and this is something that could be used as an indicator moving forward, taking into account learnings from the 2017 report 'Disabled people's travel behaviour and attitudes to travel.

[Disabled people's travel behaviour and attitudes to travel \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

One aspect that this report employed was the implementation of a grading system of different disabilities and access requirements. This graded different forms of disabled people's experiences in order to analyse travel trends. The Disability and Transport Survey also makes a separation and asks those completing the survey to state the kind of disability they have.

As the work within this 2017 report showed, it is of significant benefit to collect specific data, which gives more insight into the individual's experience and how this effects their travel/transport decisions.

There is an opportunity within the continuation of the Disability and Transport Survey to develop from the work of this 2017 report, providing further options for those participating in the survey to provide insights into their particular barrier to travel, and gathering more data which focuses on behaviour and driving forces which impact on the values of and travel trends of disabled people.

## Consultation

It is clear from the information available via archives, what is recorded publicly in Transport Scotland's annual delivery plans, as well as via associated resources - including the Accessible Travel Hub - we can see that active consultation has been achieved recently, with webinars, consultation events, stakeholder engagement exercises in 2021 and 2022.

However, some of the recent feedback gathered in the ATF poll series shows that whilst disabled people feel - to some extent - engaged with and consulted about their current travel priorities, they often feel as though they are repeating the same issues without experiencing more impactful change.

## Accessible Travel Hub and weekly polls

The Accessible Travel Hub was set up as part of the work of the ATF, to collect information, travel, and transport resources from disparate locations in order to mitigate confusion and discrepancies and to create one central location where this information could be collected and accessed.

From quarterly reports submitted to Transport Scotland on its performance, webpage views continue to increase.

A recent focus group convened in March 2023 gathered feedback on the Accessible Travel Hub, with some of the findings being:

- That the resources on the Hub were still seen to be very beneficial and used frequently.
- That the Hub should be kept up to date with recent information where possible, and that there was potential to collaborate with transport providers to ensure that new information and travel resources are being communicated to disabled people using these services and modes, increasing the reach of this information, and collecting it all in one place of easy cross referencing and access.
- To facilitate frequent updates to the Hub, it was suggested that transport providers have a central point of contact through Transport Scotland or DES, so that new information could be added easily.
- There was also a further suggestion to involve Access Panels and gather local information on transport to be included as well.
- That the Hub could become a space which hosts training resources for staff and transport providers, and that it would also be of benefit to build on the positive

news section and highlight and record further examples of best practice relating to transport and travel.

- The web page still continues to host useful information for thousands of disabled people visiting the page, however the information within the hub does not update often.

However, through the most recent Weekly poll series of questions pertaining to the ATF - specifically communication - many disabled people still struggle with the disparate nature of travel information, having to use multiple websites and apps with inconsistencies of information which can be a barrier to journey planning and impact their confidence and likelihood of travel.

## Weekly polls

The DES weekly polls have been an incredibly well received and a successful component of the DES website and has become a vital resource for feedback and recent lived experience testimonies. With a wide range of organisations and government bodies collaborating with DES to put together poll questions, with the feedback from participant responses going on to shape and implement changes to their work.

Particularly through the Covid-19 pandemic the DES weekly polls were a useful way to communicate with disabled people and to gather timely feedback and responses to key topical issues, such as face covering exemptions, hate crime, and transport experiences.

A key development with lived experience data collection moving forward, will be to find ways of collecting further details on the individuals perspective, their locality, their access requirements, and how this intersects with their lived experience and the feedback they're sharing.

These weekly polls have been vital in assisting to form a clearer picture of the priorities, values, and experiences of disabled people both currently, and over the past three years across the changes of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Another positive step in the area of monitoring by Transport Scotland was conducting a bus station survey (2021) and taxi survey (2021), which provided useful baseline data. It is recommended that this work be continued. This would continue developing information to support needed work in both the training priority and the taxi priority.

In the archives of the ATS Group's history, we can see that the original areas and issues identified in the framework were broken down into different work packages. These were structured into 13 work streams, each work stream related to a cluster of priority actions and intersected with one or two of the six areas of the framework.

Attached to each stream was a series of commitments, a list of outputs, actions for the work stream, in addition to listing who owned or who was responsible for the work stream of the ATF. Members, according to their knowledge and interests. A low-level action plan was produced as part of the work of the ATS Group which was used to steer the work conducted over the first few years of the framework.

### [MACS Annual Report 2018 \(pdf\) pp-2](#)

We can see from early project documents published, that MACS are another key stakeholder that is crucial to both the implementation and the monitoring of the framework. We can observe that MACS still carry this management practice forward and have assigned MACS members to certain work streams, following these initial draft planning documents in 2017/18.

Other than in MACS reports, which delineate how they implement and align themselves with work streams within the ATF, there is a data gap identified between the initial planning, action plans, and driver maps drafted in 2017 and 2018, and previous annual delivery plans.

This review could find no available information evidencing whether these driver map or action plan management practices have been upheld, or whether the 13 originally mapped out work streams are still used as a monitor and guide for all the stakeholders involved in delivery.

The archiving and storing of many of these reporting documents and management processes system appear to have been negatively impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and additional internal factors to Transport Scotland. Through background research some of these early driver maps and monitoring documents have been found, however it is recommended that further work be done to map a timeline of planning and reporting documents.

It is advised that by locating all 13 work stream driver maps originally created in collaboration with other key stakeholders involved in the ATS group that these could be used as the basis for a reflection on progress made and a guide for moving forward.

However due to the identified gaps in the ATF's archiving and reporting history, it is difficult to ascertain how effective this evaluation and monitoring could be as we were unable to find current evidence within the information available whether this practice was continued on an annual basis.

In 2018 we can see these initial reporting strategies worked positively:

- MACS redefined and refocused the framework of the committee. This included an overarching Planning and Strategy Workstream that incorporates all modal workstream leads.

MACS has agreed to assist with Work Package 2 (Assistance During the Journey) and Work Package 8 (Information) of the Accessible Travel Framework.

We can see from some 2018 project documents, that multimodal journeys and integration between modes of transport were acknowledged as a priority moving forward.

The first [Accessible Travel Annual Delivery Plan 2019-2020 \(pdf\)](#) was produced by Transport Scotland as potentially a new method of updating and delineating the work being done. With work streams now being categorised as priorities to be acted upon, and a series of actions attached to each one. It is stated in this plan that it updates on the progress since 2016. This first plan document spans the first three years of progress and looked forward to the end of 2020.

The plan was put together in collaboration with Transport Scotland's accessible transport partners, the 15 public appointees who make up the Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS), DPOs, Access Panels and transport operators.

Example achievements stated in the 2019 Transport Scotland annual delivery plan:

- Advance noticed for passenger assistance reduced by 50%.

The advance notice required for ScotRail passenger assistance has reduced by 50% from four hours in 2016, to two hours today. and we anticipate a further 50% reduction by around 2021 – the lowest in the UK – this compares with most of the other UK operators requiring 24 hours. ScotRail is reporting passenger assistance requests are up by 16.7% in 2017-2018. Pp-3).

- The plan also evidences improvements in aviation.

- A Ferries Accessibility Fund totalling £1 million financed by both Transport Scotland and transport operators, has seen substantial improvements since 2014 on Scotland's ferries and terminals, such as: accessible doors and changing places toilets being installed in some terminals and ferries, training including guide dog and dementia is being rolled out for staff annually.
- The annual delivery plan states that these documents will be co-produced and used as a guide to steer the next year's work whilst reflecting on the previous.

In the second annual delivery plan published by Transport Scotland in 2021, we can see that the language of the delivery plan production shifts to a consultation model, working with the ATS group, and DES consultation exercises.

The current priorities have been agreed through an extended period of engagement with disabled people which has involved one-to-one meetings, group discussions with various organisations from the ATS group, a series of webinars hosted by DES and polls on a range of subjects that are important to disabled travellers which have helped to increase the understand of the impact of the pandemic on journeys, including how confidence to travel can be strengthened.

#### [Accessible Travel Annual Delivery Plan 2021-22 \(pdf\)](#)

Each of the eight thematic priority areas within this year's Delivery Plan are taken from the ten-year Accessible Travel Framework and are underpinned by quality improvement methodology in partnership with the Scottish Government's Improvement Team.

As an addition, we can see that the DES Weekly polls have become a useful way of gathering more immediate and specific data on a variety of travel and transport related topics.

We can see that up until February 2020 Accessible Travel check-in events took place hosted by DES across different areas of Scotland. The summary reports for these events evidence that these events were reformatted legacies of the Longitudinal Progress Evaluation Group proposed in the original framework's development. These can be seen as positive exercises, with feedback after the events noting that they would like these to be recurring check-ins.

However, we can see that as work has progressed on the priority actions outlined in this document, the monitoring and evaluation work has not been equally prioritised on a continual basis, due to lack of resources and support.

It is a vital component of successfully working towards these outcomes to research, compile, and archive both the history of how this framework has been planned, managed, and experienced by disabled people. This would not only support the work of Transport Scotland as they work to facilitate resolving these priority issues, but also would ensure that the continuous monitoring and evaluating work of the Accessible Travel Framework is conducted with a similar ethos of co-production and collaboration that the original document was made with.

We can see that many of the original indicators have been continued and utilised to inform reporting such as the annual delivery plans and the progress reports. That said, we can also observe that qualitative measures have not been as clearly continued and implemented across all the workstreams carried forward.

Engaging with the format of the ADP published previously, some of the progress indicators are not always made clear in the reporting, not showing which of the 48 issues identified have been completed. It can also be difficult to ascertain what a measure of progress or completion can be in these areas. It is recommended that if this format is to be considered then an appendix is attached which outlines which issues are in progress, which are complete, and which have not been started yet.

The actions required to deliver the vision, cannot just be presented, or achieved centrally, some actions are more appropriately addressed at local and regional levels, according to personal and geographical issues.

#### [Going Further: Scotland's Accessible Travel Framework \(pdf\)](#)

Subsequently as part of these monitoring actions Transport Scotland have developed a method of updating on the priorities they are currently focusing on and what has been done so far in some of these areas. These have been published in the form of annual delivery plans, the first one was published in 2019 spanning 2019 – 2020, and the second published in 2021 spanning 2021 – 2022.

The indicators raised in the ADP focus on increased awareness and increased usage, but in order to evaluate impact and progress the indicators need to focus on the user experience. From the original intentions of the ATF monitoring, there should also be qualitative indicators. It is evident from assessing many of the surveys, polls, and event summary reports, that there is a lack of continuity to the questions being circulated to disabled people about their experiences of travel, making it difficult to find key through lines of progress being made on specific issues.



With the quantitative measures implemented, which all run on a predominantly annual basis - with the exemptions of the Covid-19 related impacts - we can see that for the most the part, the questions and the format stays broadly the same and becomes much more effective to work with the data comparatively.

## Review of transport accessibility statistics

The report was part of a wider body of work looking into the accessibility of modes of data collection, and in particular how statistics were/are being gathered specifically pertaining to the accessibility of travel.

The Office of Statistic Regulation (OSR) published a report in February 2022 which further develops this work. The Review of Transport Accessibility Statistics focused on ascertaining whether statistics gathered relating to accessibility and transport were meeting user needs.

[Review of Transport Accessibility Statistics – Office for Statistics Regulation \(statisticsauthority.gov.uk\)](https://statisticsauthority.gov.uk)

The review found that for a variety of reasons the data collected was not consistently meeting the user needs across the UK. The review noted that it did not identify a significant demand in Scotland beyond internal data collection points, and further noted that other organisations consulted also relied on their own qualitative data collection channels.

The OSR review lists some key recommendations based on its findings. These recommendations align with the work of the ATF, and more widely with this newly developed body of monitoring and evaluation work begun with this report and project.

One of the key recommendations from the review was the development of lived experience of disabled people:

*“By moving to a model of defining disability that reflects social barriers, not just impairments, policy makers will better understand the experiences of individuals”*

This report suggested that as monitoring and evaluation plans which were in development to support the remaining work of the ATF's life span and beyond, that all take into consideration the recommendations of the OSR's review and carry forward some of these recommendations when implementing changes to monitoring and evaluation systems of the ATF.

Similar to the findings of this review into the ATF monitoring and evaluation systems, this 2022 review noted that Transport Scotland should consider seeking user engagement to find ways of supporting local understanding and policy development.

The view noted that clarity and transparency between policy departments, analytics professionals, and users was of the upmost importance. Noting that they should find effective ways of being clear and open with users about how they and the public will be able to evaluate impacts of their transport strategies.

The approach of this review echoes this recommendation, as this report aims to present information on what systems have been and are currently in place. Furthermore, this report draws on lived experience data from disabled people in Scotland, reflecting on the information shared to consider the most effective ways of measure progress and monitoring impacts and meaningful change in ways that considers and responds to current priorities, values, and experiences of disabled people in Scotland.

Similar to the findings within the OSR review, this review finds that Transport Scotland - alongside many other policy departments across the UK - require to focus their attention on the practical amalgamation (integration) of lived-experience data into how progress is indicated and measured, in relation to strategies and implementation plans.

The 2022 OSR review shares similar findings to the 'Disabled people's travel behaviour and attitudes to travel' (2017) report, both of which found that the behaviours and driving factors to the decision-making process that disabled people go through when planning travel, would help inform and provide more accurate information about travel and transport trends, and the needs of disabled people in relation to transport strategies.

This review begins this journey, laying out a series of key recommendations which can be trialled and put into action to work towards meetings these OSR recommendations surrounding lived experience data.

The OSR review notes that they did not find a significant need for more external data, as they found that additional data collection points in partnership with stakeholder organisations such as MACS, were supporting and meeting these requirements. It further noted that these were predominantly qualitative forms of data.

This reflects a positive step in Transport Scotland's partnership with organisations collecting and working with qualitative data and investing time and resources into consultation and data collection channels which prioritise lived experience.

The OSR review aligns with the ethos of this review, which is to highlight and draw from lived-experience data as the first point of call when planning, implementing policies and devising systems of change.

The OSR review also noted that publishing not only the data but also the metrics and infrastructure of progress measurement to enable those interested/involved to carry out their own analysis and track progress would be of benefit.

This review agrees and reflects on testimonial data from disabled people in recent months, that many of those involved in polls, consultation exercises and focus groups were not aware of how this on-going work was being monitored since its original publication in 2016, with many individuals commenting that they were not aware of what progress has been made, and how it is being measured.

The DES weekly polls and other engagement exercises indicate that many disabled people feel that they have not been consistently informed of monitoring and evaluation systems or progress or changes being implemented. New data and data collections systems need to be more consistently related and it needs to directly correspond and map onto the priority action moving forward, with this process being done in consultation with those who use the services or experience these barriers to mobility.

Whilst there are some opportunities for feedback consultation during planning and monitoring project stages, lived-experience testimonial data shows that there is further work to be done to provide truly inclusive consultation opportunities, consistently across various regions within Scotland. Consultation and co-production requires to be monitored and evidenced through project plans moving forward with the work of the ATF.

This compounded with many other channels of feedback from disabled people across the last four years, which articulate confusion and lack of awareness of impactful change across some key areas of the ATF's identified issues.

This could become a new key function of the Accessible Travel Hub, and some of regional events and online events which are staged across different regions of Scotland.

This underpins the recommendation from this review which is to develop systems of measures and indicators developed with and shared with disabled people, which can inform and guide implementation plans, and assessments of progress towards completing the priorities of the ATF.

As mentioned in the background to the ATF, a longitudinal study was proposed as another key monitor of progress throughout the framework's lifespan. It is evident from user experience data gaps that this longitudinal study was an important component of the qualitative progress indicators, and not having this continued data has impacted the review's ability to reflect on the accumulated impact of the framework's implemented work streams since 2016.

Both this UK-wide OSR review, and smaller reports and reflective exercises undertaken by Transport Scotland are incredibly positive steps towards meeting these goals and working towards closing the mobility gap with an ethos and systems in keeping with the beliefs of the ATF - prioritising consultation and lived experiences of disabled people as the central guiding force which effects the priorities and action plans implemented.

## Disabled people's travel behaviour and attitudes to travel

We can see from research that similar recommendations and practices pertaining to gathering behaviour and emotion-driven data sets, which filters and categorises data trends by creating different categories of disability, allow for further detail within the travel trend analysis. A report was developed and published in 2017, one year into the ATF's lifespan, which develops this research.

[Disabled people's travel behaviour and attitudes to travel \(pdf\)\(gov.uk\)](#)

The report evidenced gaps in data collection systems, where insufficient detail was being collected pertaining to the individuals experience and how factors in individual lives impact travel and transport decisions and therefore need to be woven into the data collection and analysis.

The aim of 'Disabled people's travel behaviour and attitudes to travel' (2017) was to begin to address gaps in the evidence base on the travel behaviour of people with disabilities, drawing on recent secondary analysis of five key surveys. The work of this report became another way to consider the baseline data with the particular focus being on attitudes and behaviours of disabled people.

This report also articulated a key gap in the knowledge base which persists today. In comparing some of the observations from the 2017 report and the 2022 report - alongside analysis conducted as part of the research for this review - we find that this key issue pertains to the ability of Transport Scotland, and other stakeholders working with the ATF. In essence the issue stems from not only a lack of data which pertains to particular areas or work packages, but also from a lack of data which separates its information with enough detail to provide data to conduct a meaningful impact evaluation. Specifically, to provide an accurate reflection on the trends of how different disabled people are travelling and the specific regional and individual issues pertaining to travel.

More recent reporting, such as the 'Disability and Transport Report' (2021), began to implement some of these practices, such providing additional options for the level of barrier that the disabled person experiences due their particular disability. However further information such as age and region would provide further clarity.

The 2017 report acknowledges the gaps between travel trends within data collected from disabled people. These gaps within the body of data - which shows the wider picture of disabled people's travel trends - mean that vital pieces of information which create the set of conditions which relate to a disabled person's travel habits and what the barriers, priorities, and values they have, reflect that important data which could help inform action plans and evaluation, are not being recorded via many existing annual and bi-annual data collection channels utilised as original indicators for monitoring the progress of the ATF's work.

The 2017 report also promoted the idea of longitudinal data collection, which was a component of the ATF's monitoring implementation plan which was unfortunately discontinued.

Whilst this review finds clear indications that the initial longitudinal study was deemed unfeasible to continue, that this (compounded with the Covid-19 pandemic), further indicated that they would not be feasible to reinstate.

However longitudinal studies, or data collection which upholds continuity across a broad range of regions and a wide spectrum of disabled people with differing experiences, would be one of the most effective ways to chart progress and impact of the ATF work packages across Scotland.

The 2017 report notes that the context of someone's journey, their characteristics (i.e., their particular access requirements; geographical locality), needs to be considered as a wide spectrum, rather than the standard approach, which collates data from a wide range of disabled people without having the additional questions in place to mediate them.

The report notes that the individual disabled person's barriers to travel and their personal experience and access needs range vastly and these need to be taken into consideration when considering priorities and action plans moving forward.

Whilst this review pushes for these considerations and practices within data collection and analysis of disabled people and transport data, this is supported by the same observations made within the OSR review, focusing on the need for lived experience data collection and analysis,

The inclusion of more consistent and detailed measures of disability could maximise the future ability of researchers to synthesise findings from different surveys already in place would be useful, providing more in-depth insights into travel needs and trends.

Within the implementation of these goals and the monitoring of progress, consideration needs to be made and evaluation/monitoring metrics need to be put in place which accounts for:

- the travel trends of disabled people.
- access requirements.
- the range of factors which contribute to disabled people's behaviours when it comes to travel.

## Monitoring and evaluation group

A further way that these considerations can be implemented in the remaining lifespan of the ATF, could be through the work of the recently established Monitoring and Evaluation Group set up by MACS and Transport Scotland in 2023.

It is proposed that the group would contain representatives from:

- Transport Scotland Analytical Team.
- Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland.
- Disability Equality Scotland and.
- Transport Scotland Accessible Travel Team.

This recent development signifies a positive development towards implementing some of the recommendations from this review.

The initial aim of this group is to monitor and review progress as it develops towards the collective goal that all participating organisations have, which is to close the mobility gap and make transport more accessible by removing barriers experienced by disabled people. The group notes that a specific aim within this is to improve monitoring and evaluation and research regarding disability and transport and its relationship to NTS2 and the ATF.

## Priorities

This section aims to use examples of some of the key priorities within the six areas of the ATF and to highlight some positives and areas for further development within the work action plans of these priorities. Specifically, looking at testimonies and experiences disabled people have had with these priorities, and most importantly reflecting on what has been shared from their lived experience and making recommendations of how these priorities could be developed and changes implemented in the future.

By demonstrating this through examples of priorities thus far, this section aims to illustrate how using lived experience data can be used to put in place actionable tasks moving towards wider priority goals identified by the user, and how the values and priorities articulated in lived experience data can be used to create indicators of progress.

This section of the report reflects some of the most relevant priorities previously outlined by Transport Scotland in their two annual delivery reports (2019 and 2021). It also includes one additional priority suggestion which focuses on consultation and co-production and active & sustainable travel. As is evidenced by recent engagement exercises with disabled people we can see that co-production is highly valued and acknowledged as incredibly beneficial to upholding the work of the ATF.

Where available data allows, each section will reflect on how Transport Scotland have worked towards action(s) in this area, using this collected data as the basis to make recommendations for these areas that could be developed further.

Including all priorities was out with the scope of this report, either due to the time constraints of the project or due to a lack of clear data and information pertaining to the work packages and monitoring channels of the particular priority.

Areas such as taxis, clear pathways, journey planning and active/sustainable travel, were all key priorities which were repeatedly raised throughout testimonial evidence within stakeholder engagement exercises recently conducted by Transport Scotland and via online consultation and weekly polls.

## Passenger assistance

This priority was outlined in Transport Scotland's first Annual Delivery Plan (2019), which described the priority as:

*“More people with reduced mobility using public transport who require passenger assistance use trains and ferries”*

[Accessible Travel Annual Delivery Plan-2019-2020 \(pdf\)](#)

There is an identified need, mentioned in Transport Scotland's Annual Delivery plan 2021-22 and on their website for a similar service to be provided by bus services.

This is based on the increased usage and satisfaction rates of rail passenger assistance, and the recent Disability and Transport survey data which showed that a higher number of disabled people are using buses as their primary mode of public transport. We can see an increased need for bus passenger assistance to be made a priority moving forward.

This development is a marker of positive progress for the rail passenger assistance work which has been implemented over the last five to seven years.

One of the key ways of monitoring the progress of this priority specifically for rail is through the Transport Focus Passenger Assistance data gathered primarily from ScotRail and through the Office of Rail and Road Data Portal.

This shows that the majority of those using the service had a positive successful experience.

Booked assistance outcomes for 2017-18 were at 81% all assistance received and 10% no assistance received.

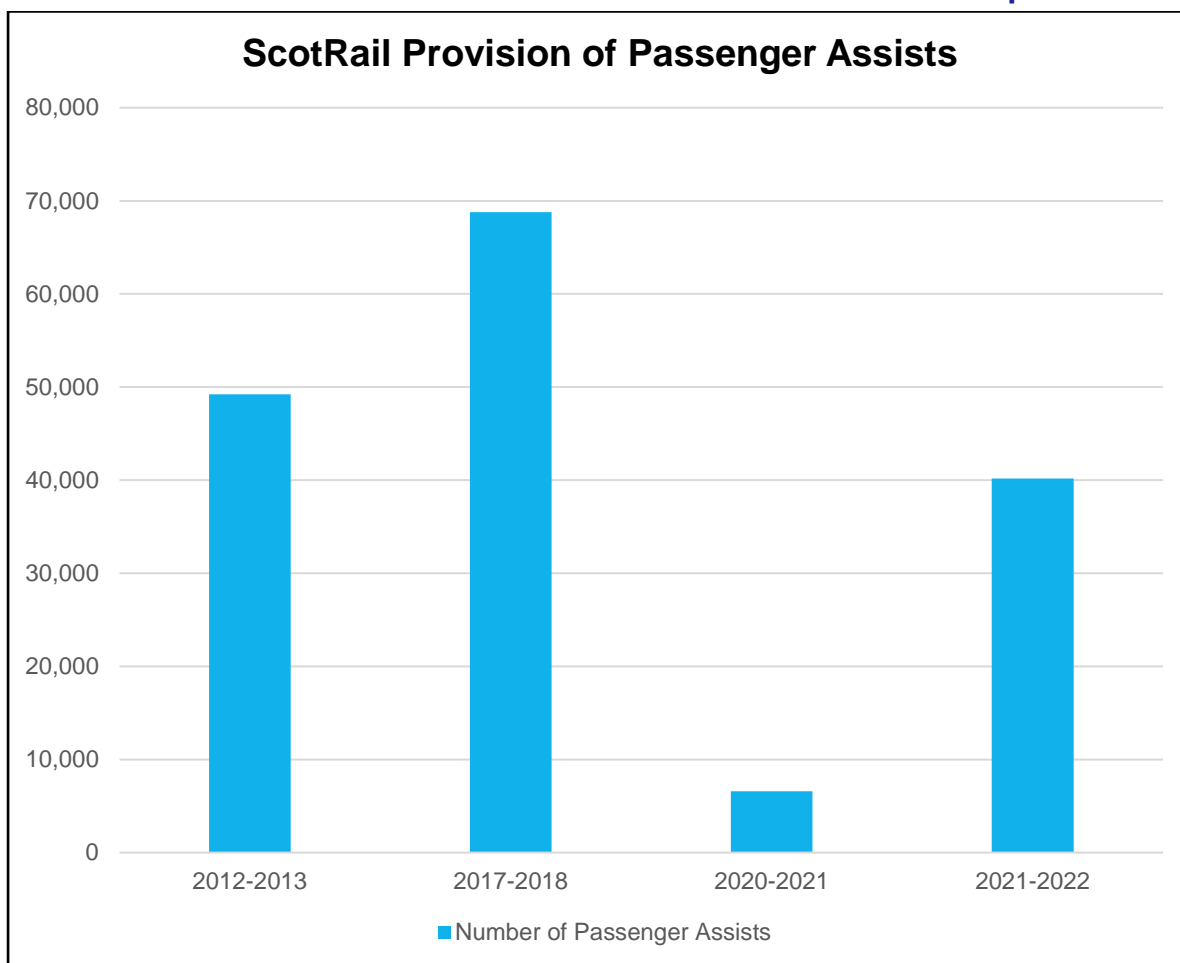
In 2021-22 we can see that 93% satisfaction with assistance received at stations

- 83% overall satisfaction with the service.
- 76% reported having received all assistance booked.
- 12% no assistance booked was received.

These areas' steady progression would evidence that it is no longer a high priority as work is continually being undertaken and satisfaction rates are high.

We can also see an increase in usage whilst also seeing that the experience and satisfaction rates have stayed the same which is a positive sign of increasing quantity of service without losing quality of service.





\*Source: ORR Data Portal.

As the graph above demonstrates, the number of passenger journeys - and consequently the number of passenger assists in 2020/2021 - was significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

However, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic was more far-reaching, in terms of the personal testimonies shared, in terms of the decrease in satisfaction and in the change in usage.

Through the ORR statistics provided we can see that the satisfaction rates have remained quite stable and high, spanning from the beginning of this data collection in 2017 until the most recent release in 2022.

There were 356,500 passenger assists requested during rail periods 5 to 7 of the latest year - up 44.8% on the same rail periods in the previous year. There were also 113,956 passenger bookings requested during rail periods 5 to 7 of the latest year, up 48.3% on the same rail periods in the previous year.

Satisfaction with service received at 96% in 2017-18 and 93% in 2021-22. This small change is indicative of some of the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Another priority area listed in the annual delivery plan looked at buses which intersect with the passenger assistance priority.

With the 2021 Annual Delivery Plan published by Transport Scotland showing some key actions exploring this:

*“Undertake a poll, through Disability Equality Scotland to gauge the lived experience of our disabled bus travellers.”*

*“Through discussions with bus operators consider a trial of assistance at interchanges and bus terminals.”*

We can see that these actions have been undertaken through the Bus Station Passenger Assistance weekly poll carried out in 2021, alongside more recent travel experience data gathered through weekly polls, and through collecting experiences via webinars hosted by DES in 2021 and 2022.

We can also see that this has been acted upon with Transport Scotland collecting data from bus operators and stations in 2021-22.

This priority has been acted upon through the continued support and awareness raising activities undergone by Transport Scotland, to ensure that disabled people are aware of these services.

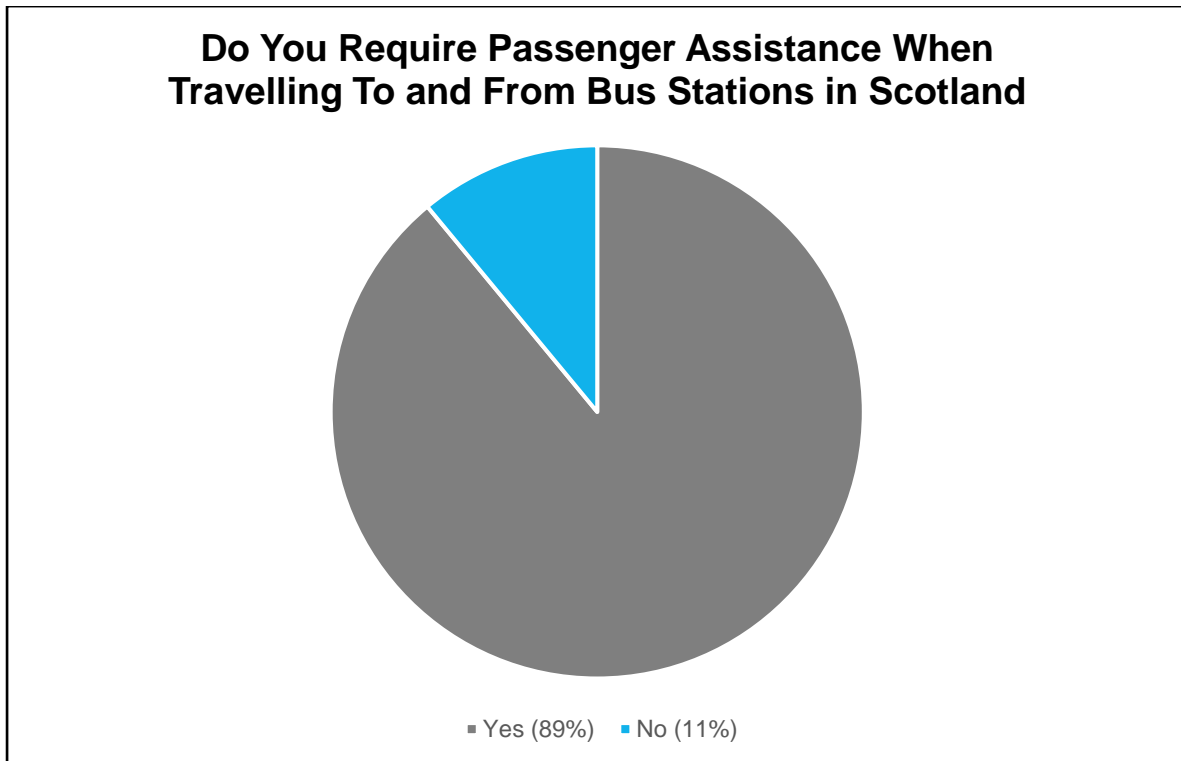
We can also see from the perspective of disabled people using some of these services that the priority for them is in the implementation of a consistent user experience throughout different transport modes, and some of the testimonial data reflecting on both bus and rail shows that there are inconsistencies with the delivery of passenger assistance across different stations and regions.

The data gathered from DES members reflects that many disabled people travelling do not have access to apps or consistent Wi-Fi, or do not feel comfortable using apps or websites. Many respondents in recent engagement exercises commented on the need to prioritise in person or live phone conversation to arrange and clarify their passenger assistance needs within the next iteration of Transport Scotland’s Annual Delivery Plan.

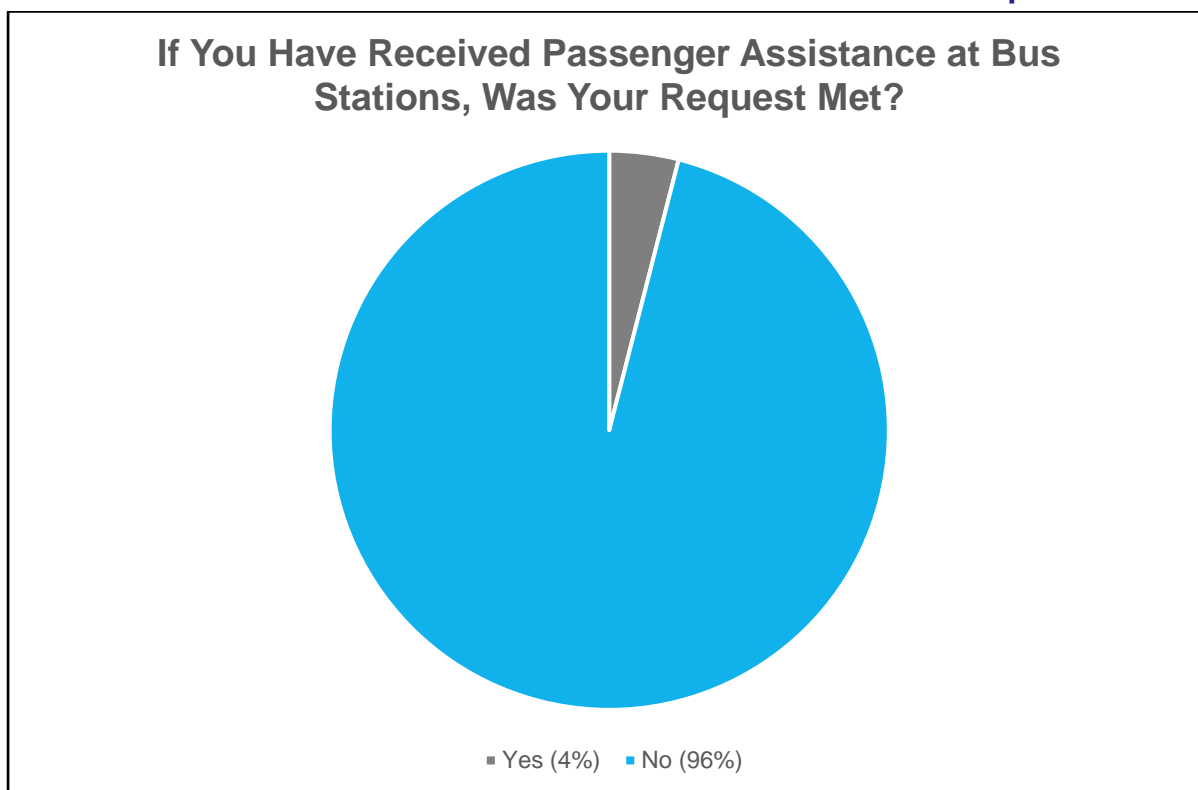
Bus passenger assistance was also highlighted as an area to be pursued in the 2021-22 delivery plan. Transport Scotland carried out a bus operator survey in February 2021, to gather information as to what forms of passenger assistance were offered currently and would the station be open to trialling passenger assistance services in the coming years.

Gathering this data to establish a baseline has been extremely beneficial and will inform the next stage of this project moving forward.

Follow-up consultation conducted by DES with disabled people indicated:



\*Source: Accessible Travel Framework Weekly Poll Series, DES (Oct/Nov 2022)



\*Source: Accessible Travel Framework Weekly Poll Series, DES (Oct/Nov 2022)

Most respondents (89%) stated that they require passenger assistance when travelling to and from bus stations in Scotland.

From the respondents who had requested passenger assistance, 96% (137 respondents) indicated that their request was not met.

Respondents also highlighted the importance of ensuring that when travelling by bus, there is a commitment to communicate in an accessible manner that considers the principles of Inclusive Communication. This includes awareness of communicating in a manner which matches the strengths and preferences of each individual, as well as the availability of information in a range of accessible formats, including Easy Read, a format that uses simple, jargon-free language, shorter sentences and supporting image.

These are all areas raised in the recent DES poll series, “Accessible Travel Framework Four Part Series: Communication with transport providers in Scotland,” which focused on access to information and communication channels and disabled people’s recent experiences with them.

Many respondents noted that these issues have been made worse by the impacts of prevailing external factors such as:

- the Covid-19 pandemic.
- industrial action within the transport sector.
- the cost-of-living crisis.

These issues have been reinforced throughout various stakeholder exercises conducted with disabled people over the last year.

Improvements to accessible travel on buses had been a high priority since the first annual delivery plan in 2019. However, we can see that this priority has developed into more tangible outcomes since the 2021 Annual Delivery Plan was published, which is a sign of positive work which needs to be continued to address some of these priority issues raised.

User satisfaction rates generally maintained a high level, with issues raised within personal testimonies, polls and webinars pertaining to localised issues.

A further positive improvement was the 'Turn up and Go' scheme Scot Rail and other rail transport providers now offer. This is an extremely positive development, as independence to travel and being able to travel without having to pre-plan journeys is something that many disabled people particularly with mobility issues requiring passenger assistance have raised as a key barrier to their feeling confident and at ease with travel.

This report identifies this as a positive step forward in prioritising actions which bring disabled people closer to independent travel where possible. This is also a positive example of clearly identifying a particular value within the travel experience for many people with disabilities traveling via rail, and putting in place a trial initiative which moves towards resolving this issue clearly and effectively making a meaningful impact on individuals' travel experiences.

The Passenger Assistance priority also encapsulates the Thistle Assistance card and app and the National Entitlement Card as well.

This is an area with active concerns raised via engagement exercises. These concerns have been raised by DES members since 2021, when polls reflected dissatisfaction with the user experience of the Thistle Assistance card.

The Thistle Assistance card has increased its reach, offering services to many disabled people in Scotland. It has also continued to be a responsive company which provided a face mask exemption aspect to the card as part of its adaptation to the Covid-19 pandemic. This was a positive adaptation, much needed during the pandemic.

More recently Thistle Assistance has been developing their work into the Wayfinding and Journey Planning priorities outlined in both Transport Scotland's priorities and reflected in recent stakeholder engagement exercises with disabled people.

The Thistle Assistance VoyagAR is aimed at the journey planning issues identified across many key stakeholder consultation exercises with disabled people.

For this project Thistle Assistance have partnered with Sentireal to develop this further. However, from the lived experience feedback collected as part of the recently staged ATF poll series, run as part of this project, we can see that many people are still experiencing inconsistency with delivery of services, support, and recognition of services.

Respondents have commented that there have been many inconsistencies with what support is provided and how bus and rail staff treat disabled people and the requirements to provide accessible services.

Confounding the whole area of travel applications (apps) is that many transport providers have now developed and are offering their own apps, or systems of booking passenger assistance. Feedback has indicated that many disabled people find this confusing and even more difficult to manage.

Indeed, respondents have additionally commented that there were too many different options when it came to assistance cards and that there should be some way of combining them.

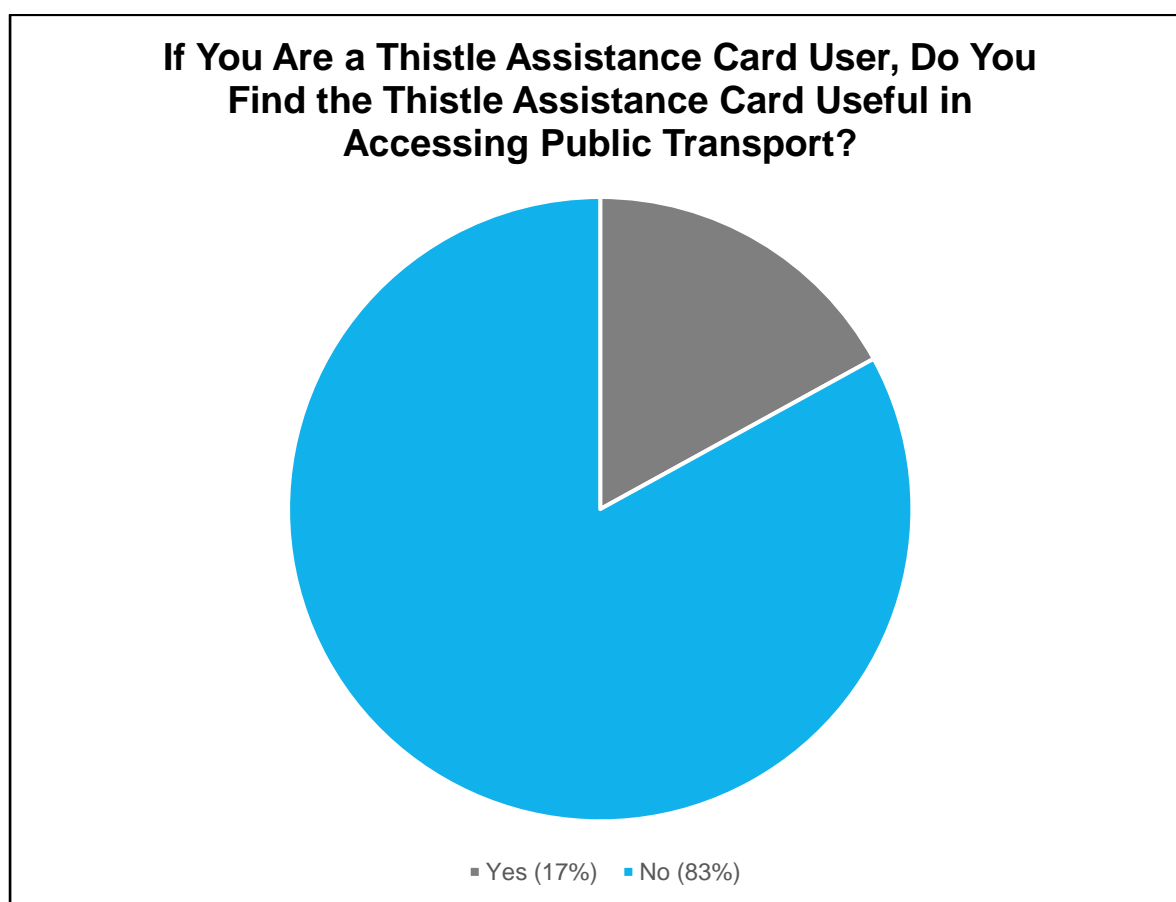
"If it isn't possible to have one app for all operators then an uber-app that links to the other apps would be useful to find appropriate apps when in different regions of Scotland. Combining all of these individual ideas into one app and allowing for a printed card to be produced would really help in making travel easy. It should also be possible to extend this into non-travel uses in a similar fashion to hidden disabilities to allow more flexibility."

In association with Thistle Assistance, feedback from disabled people noted that they felt that additional disability and equality awareness training was needed based on their experiences.

Some respondents commented that they felt that the cards could only be effective once relevant training had been administered and frequently monitored.

Whilst there were some positive experiences recorded, many respondents felt that having multiple different cards and apps was confusing and became a barrier to their travel. Having something which linked them all together could be beneficial.

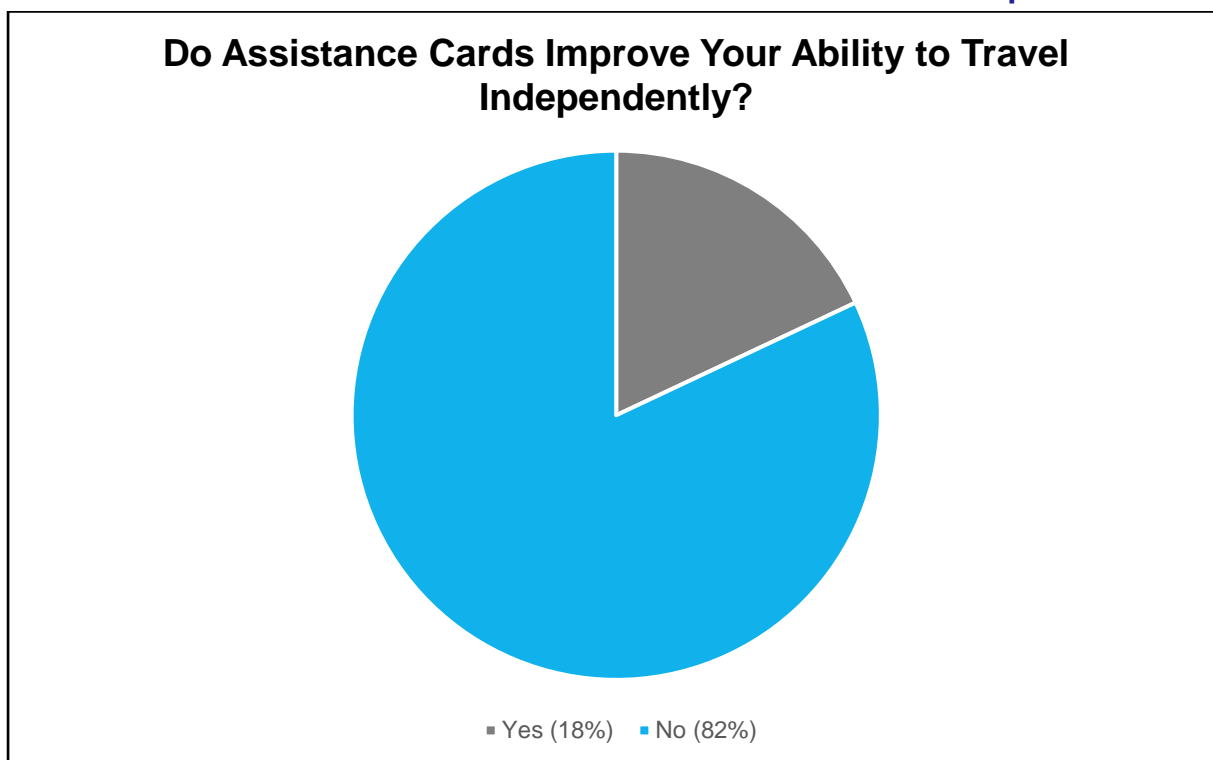
In terms of the success of the Thistle Assistance card, poll respondents supplied the following overview in 2019:



\*Source: Weekly Poll, Disability Equality Scotland (2019).

Slightly more respondents (81) answered this question, than the 71 respondents who indicated that they were current users - with 17% of respondents identifying that the Thistle Assistance Card was useful in accessing public transport (Ref. Thistle Assistance Card Disability Equality Scotland briefing paper 2019).

In 2021 a follow-up poll was conducted, where a question was asked about Travel Assistance Cards and Apps.



\*Source: Weekly Poll, Disability Equality Scotland (2021).

We can see that there has not been a significant change in this response from disabled people, reflecting that issues are still arising with the delivery of this service.

This is further demonstrated through the comments collected in the 2019 and 2021 weekly polls, with many responses stating that disabled people experience issues with front-facing staff:

- not recognising the card, or
- not offering assistance when the card is shown.

Concerns were raised about the incorporation of Thistle Assistance Card training for bus and rail front-facing staff especially. These issues were more recently raised in the November 2022 ATF poll series, reflecting that these issues have been consistently recurring since 2019.

As noted above, both the 2021 and 2022 polls reflect that many members feel that there are too many different apps and websites, and that there is work to be done to simplify this. This may suggest:

That further resources and information apps and websites have become available and that transport providers are working harder to provide passenger assistance information and booking systems, which is a positive development - showing progression since the first Annual Delivery Plan in 2019.



That these further resources potentially have led to some confusion, are not always accessible and not effective at providing easy assistance and information to facilitate accessible and inclusive travel opportunities.

Through responses to this and other recent polls we can see that many respondents stated that they had positive experiences with the National Entitlement Cards.

*“The NEC card gives me confidence that I can go many more places around Scotland that I could do without it have only used the National Entitlement card and have found this to be invaluable for going to clinic appointments”.*

### [Weekly Poll – Travel Assistance Cards and Apps \(Week Beginning 18 October 2021\) - Disability Equality Scotland](#)

Whereas many respondents stated that they had difficulties with the Thistle Assistance card.

Respondents stated that they had received a negative experience with transport staff, of them:

- not providing the necessary support and help for the passenger, or
- being rude or argumentative, and in many instances making the disabled person very uncomfortable during their journey.

“I use the Thistle App on the bus to show I can’t wear a mask, but the driver screamed at me while at the stop before seeing this app meaning I was stopped from showing it until I calmed enough at the end of the journey to be able to counter him. I’ve not travelled by bus since as I’m too afraid of repeats, the public humiliation and excruciating fear his reaction induced.”

It was noted that many transport staff were not aware of all the different kinds of assistance cards available, and in some instances the staff were not aware what some cards were, or what support they may need to offer.

A measure of progress for this in the short term could be creating a consultation group of disabled people to work on the testing phases and completing a successful phase of user testing from a wide test group of disabled people, with a variety of different disabilities. This testing phase could yield positive results showing that disabled people find the service successful and supports individuals to make successful door to door journeys.

Furthermore, a successful outcome in this area might be that Thistle Assistance and other similar passenger assistance and wayfinding apps and websites are supported to come together with some DPOs and disabled people interested to form a consultation group, to put together training and best practice guidelines for transport providers.

Whilst we can see that great progress has been made in the area of passenger assistance via both increased reach and satisfaction rates of passenger assistance on rail, reflecting on the user feedback evidenced within this review, we cannot conclude that this priority is successful at this stage and suggest that further work is undertaken to collect user data to monitor delivery.

A measure of progress from this priority might be that further work is undertaken to implement similar services with bus operators and to run a bus operator trial of this service.

Within the original driver map uncovered within the research phase of this report the driver map states that the aims are that:

*'By 2020 every disabled person will have access to an assistance card.'*

We can see from the DES membership data, that many disabled people have access to and use assistance cards to varying degrees of success.

From examining this priority, we can see that the combination of poll data gathered by DES - posing specific questions - and the quantitative data gathered from Rail and Bus Passenger Survey and the ORR Data Portal, this is a positive use of both forms of data collection and allows for an informed decision and implementation plan to be carried forward by Transport Scotland.

We can see clear outcomes and actions moving forward in this area informed by recent travel experiences and identified needs from disabled people, and we can also see positive impacts and satisfaction with services via the experience data collected.

Taking this as an example of successfully gathering and connecting the different qualitative and quantitative indicators as suggested by the original framework, all areas should have both strands of data feeding into its continuing monitoring.

## Training

Staff training is one of the most frequently raised issues across lived experience data, throughout the lifespan of the ATF to date.

Training of staff and issues raised due to inconsistencies of that training, have been raised since the ATF was originally published in 2016. Predominantly these issues pertain to Rail and Bus travel experiences.

This section aims to explore some recent changes and experiences pertaining to this priority and based on testimonials shared from disabled people in Scotland, through recent stakeholder engagement exercises.

Training is referred to as “an action within multiple priorities” within the 2019-20 Annual Delivery Plan but is not named as a specific priority.

This is a multi-modal priority which spans across rail, bus, ferry, and aviation and was raised by disabled people predominantly in relation to bus driver training.

Consultation respondents shared that this would positively impact their ability to make successful journeys. Many shared experiences highlighted discrepancies in services offered, with staff unaware of what support was required and usually offered for disabled people - with staff often not recognising assistance cards such as a Thistle Assistance card.

Some respondents also shared that further training for rail and taxi services would also be vital to improving their journey experience and would go a long way to building their confidence and trust in public transport. Many respondents noted that across rail, bus and taxi services discrepancies and inconsistency had increased and that monitoring and incentivising more up to date and comprehensive front facing staff training would be of great value.

We also see through the bus operator survey that another area of training development needs to be with station staff as they are also providing passenger assistance and providing information and supports for disabled people using passenger assistance services.

### Bus staff training

This intersects with the legacy Bus priority originally put forward in the 2019 Annual Delivery Plan and carried forward in the 2021 plan:

*“To enable more disabled people in Scotland to use buses by working towards fully accessible information, infrastructure and design.”*

Some of the original driver maps for the bus priority - which we suspect were drafted in 2018 or 2019 and recently discovered within archive material - reflect that two key areas of development were training and access to information, which sits within the wider scope of multiple key priorities being carried forward by Transport Scotland since 2019.

There have been some recent efforts to recover this data but at this time, the rest of these have not been discovered. It is suspected that in staffing changes, the impact of the pandemic and working from home, that these driver maps have been lost.

The information component of the bus priority is apparent in the improvement and developments in the passenger assistance priorities, with the use of the Thistle Assistance card, and with the potential trialling of bus passenger assistance.

However, in the recent poll series focusing on transport, we can see that the availability of inclusive and accessible formats has increased - however there are still many instances where inclusive communication options are not available.

The other element of the bus legacy priorities, focused on disability and equality awareness training and ensuring that staff are confident and effective at delivering support and delivering positive and successful travel experiences to disabled people.

Engaging with the recently collected bus operator data gathered by Transport Scotland (2021), we can see that in different geographical areas, there are noticeable differences and discrepancies with the services on offer.

The survey covered eight areas around Scotland, and asked providers in each area a series of questions about what accessible services they offered:

- Five out of eight stated that they provided passenger facing duties and had the scope to provide help to passengers getting around the station, or on/off buses.
- Four out of eight stated they had staffed information desks to provide support and advice. Glasgow only having one staffed information desk for passenger information.

From data previously collected, staffed information desks in stations are a high priority for many disabled people traveling in Scotland, with many commenting on the impact that closures and limitations due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and other external factors have affected in-person services within travel.

Whilst the responses show that it needs to be made a priority to consider new ways of providing in-person support for disabled people travelling by bus, recent data shows that a barrier to many passengers is having the confidence to plan journeys and make multi-modal journeys. This subsequently impacts their experiences and their likelihood of being able to make linked journeys.

We can see that there are some really important accessible services and features being added and improved in many areas - such as talking signs being added to some Glasgow stations.

This is something that many disabled people have commented on as something that could benefit their travel experience. Further progress in this area could be collecting what accessible services and supports are available and creating a database of this in partnership with Transport Scotland.

Many areas also noted information displays, however not much detail was stated about the forms of display and how inclusive the forms of information were - something that is vital to develop further.

Operators were asked what forms of assistance they offered at their stations, with five out of eight stating that they did offer assistance and that staff could assist when needed. From these responses we can note that none of the operators responding were openly advertising the kinds of assistance that they offered.

When asked whether they offered a range of methods to enable passengers to book, every operator responded that they did not. This is something that could be supported and developed with transport operators individually - or could be developed as a wider body of work with Thistle assistance, and other apps. Alternatively, a hub of booking information could be worked towards on the Accessible Travel Hub.

When asked regarding what processes were in place to enable staff to carry out the passenger assistance requests, four out of the eight areas that responded, stated that this was not applicable, or they do not have processes in place. The other four areas stated that they do not have specific processes - but that staff will be made aware of access requirements and will support passengers where possible.

Participants in the survey were also asked about how they delivered staff training. The main challenge identified from the perspective of participants was staff availability. With a couple of areas stating that one way that this is resolved in the short-term is through other staff onsite taking on additional responsibility, which may be one of the causes of issues arising from disabled people's experiences, such as discrepancies in services quality, and lack of staff training.

## Training delivery inconsistencies

We have seen inconsistencies across all areas, with some having stated that they do provide training (and in some cases that this is mandatory), with others having stated that it is a third parties' responsibility or the operators responsibility.

Across all eight areas there are inconsistencies with who delivers training - when training is delivered - with only three areas stating that they deliver training on an annual basis to staff.

From the recent Transport Scotland survey with bus station owners, we can see some positives coming through which evidenced some areas evidencing good practice in training, including Aberdeen and the North East.

We also observed that across all eight areas, none of them have a protocol in place for refresher training, with some areas having stated that training refreshers are provided on an ad hoc basis. A further two areas stated that refresher training was considered and provided on a case-by-case basis.

Four areas did not provide station staff training, and the other four areas noted that this training was covered as part of other training that staff must go through. Observing this discrepancy between different areas, is further reflected in the loss in confidence and the disparities in experience by disabled people and evidenced in testimonial data collected.

The issues raised around inconsistencies and discrepancies of care, clearly demonstrates the need for this baseline survey and prioritised action to resolve this. The positive arising out of this is the identification of these discrepancies as a root cause of some of the issues reported by disabled people travelling in Scotland.

Five areas questioned stated they are currently reviewing how they may improve passenger assistance in their stations which is a positive sign, and three areas stating that they are also considering reviewing their staff training as well. Prioritising working on a trial of this in one or two areas and working in consultation to create passenger assistance service training with disabled people could be incredibly beneficial.

We can also see the need for bus providers to be supported and incentivised to actively offer these services, to promote them, and find easier and more open, inclusive ways of communicating the options of this assistance more widely.

From the Disability and Transport survey, it's evident buses are one of the most used transport services, and yet from testimonial data shared, and from baseline data collection such as bus station operator surveys we can see that this is a vital area for further development moving forward.

This survey was a really positive step in establishing a baseline of what services are being gathered and clearly and effectively met the actions outlined in the Transport Scotland 2021 Annual Delivery Plan. Repeating this in two years' time, would be helpful to see what has been achieved/improved by then.

Based on poll data, we can see that the priority from the perspective of those disabled people currently using buses, is that many issues arise from accessing information when they are not able to travel from a station, and when they are waiting directly at bus stops.

This review reflects on recent feedback from disabled people about what they would prioritise in relation to having more confidence and progress in door-to-door journeys using buses.

- Success at stations:
  - Inclusive communication
  - Clearer information about accessing passenger assistance.
- Success at bus stops:
  - Updated bus stop timetables
  - Phonelines
  - Live text options

Some positive developments can be evidenced through accessibility strategies and training systems such as Lothian Buses, who have a publicly available Accessibility and Inclusion Review published in 2020, which outline their Accessibility and Inclusion Goals and a plan of actions for the next three years.

#### [Accessibility and Inclusion Strategy - Lothian Buses](#)

This practice of transparency, having all of this information available, and clearly having goals which align with those priorities and values that many disabled people have recently articulated in engagement exercises and consultations is a very important positive step forwards - alongside evidencing consistency of service and training of their staff, implementing accessibility, equality, and diversity training to across all staff.

Whilst we can see some bus operators implementing changes and evidencing best practice when it comes to providing accessible services and training to their staff, recent testimonial evidence suggests that there are still many issues and barriers to consistent and confident use of bus services on a daily basis.

## Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles

Taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (PHV) are a key set of issues and priorities outlined in the ATF in 2016. This review observes that many of the issues acknowledged in the testimonies provided in the ATF are still echoed in the lived experience data collected more recently.

Whilst we can see through recent surveys of taxi operators that the spread of taxis with accessible provision has stabilised and remained similar across the 2021 and 2022 data collection from Transport Scotland.

#### [Scottish Transport Statistics 2022 \(pdf\)](#)

In the [Accessible Travel Annual Delivery Plan 2021-22 \(pdf\)](#) it stated that 23% of all taxis and PHVs were accessible.

The Scottish Transport Statistics 2022, published in March 2023 shows that in 2022 there were 20,709 total PHV vehicles across Scotland, showing a drop of approx. 3,000 - with 4,381 accessible vehicles, roughly 21% of the total taxi cohort across Scotland. This shows a minor decrease of 2% since 2021.

This combined with the recent testimonial data (February 2023) - where many respondents shared issues and concerns with accessing accessible taxis - particularly in more rural areas - indicates that the spread of available accessible taxis has decreased. This may be impacted by a number of factors, including the Covid-19 pandemic, cost of living crisis, Covid-19 pandemic, and that disabled people are experiencing this impact across different regions of Scotland.

Taxis and PHV however have not appeared as a high priority across many stakeholder engagement exercises, such as the survey conducted by Transport Scotland (2021). With Training, Journey Planning, and priority areas which span across transport modes ranking as a much higher priority.

Within poll data in the last three or four years, many disabled people's comments articulated that they rely on taxis primarily in more rural areas, in order to access other modes of transport that they cannot wheel/walk to.

Many individuals noting that if there is an issue, or additional barrier to accessing another form of transport, that this is when they rely on a taxi/PHV service. Some respondents have shared experiences where they have been stranded in these situations, due to not being able to contact an accessible taxi/PHV service.

An 'Accessible Railway Stations' poll (December 2019), included testimony from disabled people where taxis were referred to as a solution to a problem caused by other transport providers not being able to offer travel supports. However, with the limited data currently collected on disabled people's priorities when it comes to taxi use, it is difficult to ascertain the true impact from some of the positive changes implemented in recent years.

#### [Accessible Railways Poll - Comments.pdf](#)

The findings from the 2021 Scottish Local Authorities survey shows that whilst all 20 regions who took part offer accessible taxi services, many regions do not currently offer a full range of accessible services including, ramp access, lift access, side entry, rear entry, etc (Transport Scotland Taxi Survey 2021).



Within the Accessible Travel Annual Delivery Plan (ADP) 2019 to 2020, Taxis and PHV's was listed as a priority area and outlined as one of the eight priorities to be carried forward into 2019 and 2020. Taxi and PHV's are available across Scotland and meet the needs of disabled people.

It was noted in this first ADP that taxis and PHVs are locally regulated. There were over 10,000 taxis and nearly 14,000 PHVs in Scotland in 2018.

In the ADP it was stated that this was a key objective:

*“To work with local authorities and MACS to develop a good practice guide for Local Authorities and taxi operators to ensure the provision of taxis and private hire cars meet the needs of disabled people.”*

However, when looking closer at the data from the Transport Scotland survey (2021), we can see thirteen out of the nineteen areas showing no change or decreases in what resources are made available when it comes to accessibility requirements and services. This would appear to be a negative sign of development, in that whilst the number of accessible taxis has stayed the same, overall taxi numbers have increased.

This is further evidence that it is a priority to find ways of supporting and incentivising taxis to provide support.

The survey also finds that many smaller and more rural regions have very little access to accessible taxis and PHV - with the largest numbers of accessible vehicles centred in Glasgow and Edinburgh.

Excluding Edinburgh and Angus, there were 7,745 taxis and 10,566 PHV's licensed in Scotland, based on figures provided by Scottish local licensing authorities during October-November 2021. The figures show that of the 7,745 licensed taxis, 3,288 (42%) are wheelchair accessible. The proportion of wheelchair accessible vehicles varies across different authority areas.

### [Scottish Transport Statistics 2021](#)

Excluding Clackmannanshire, there were 9,271 taxis and 12,438 PHV's licensed in Scotland based on figures provided by Scottish local licensing authorities during 2022. The figures show that of the 9,271 licensed taxis, 4,381 (47%) are wheelchair accessible. The proportion of wheelchair accessible vehicles varies across different authority areas.

### [Chapter 01 - Road Transport Vehicles](#)

These statistics indicate that there is still significant work to be done to support taxi providers to prioritise providing accessible taxi services.

The Accessible Travel Hub provides some information on taxis in Scotland, however there is further work to be done to make this section of the hub effective and increase its usage.

One of the ATF's original indicators and goals outlined for the progress of accessible taxis was to:

*“Use taxi licensing to ensure 20% of taxis at any one time are accessible to wheelchair users in each local authority area.”*

The 20% indicator and goal outlined in the ATF has been an effective measure, and something to be continued as an indicator moving forward.

MACS indicates in a recent “Call for Evidence on Accessible Transport 2023 – Response” that disabled people are in some instances reliant on taxis and PHVs, due to:

- not being able to drive.
- not having access to a car.
- other transport services not being suitable for a variety of access factors.

Furthermore, MACS raises a vital point, that new app-based taxi services such as Uber should have to comply more consistently with accessible travel law and best practice policies.

Using some of the identified issues within the ATF as guidance, we can see that it is suggested that taxi licensing is used to ensure 20% of taxis at any one time are accessible to wheelchair users in each local authority area.

Using this a guide to a positive step forward for taxi priority in Scotland we can see that:

- small geographic areas which have less than 200 taxis/PHV, have an average percentage of accessible taxis of between 5% and 10%.
- large areas and more urban areas with a larger quantity of taxis/PHV have an average percentage of accessible taxis of between 25 and 40%.

Whilst we can see a positive increase in the percentage of accessible taxis - with many areas exceeding the original measurement - we can see that a positive step moving forward would be to see a more even spread of accessible taxis across all areas of Scotland.

For example:

- Aberdeenshire: 46% of their taxis are accessible.
- Edinburgh 34%.
- Glasgow 27%.
- Fife 10%.
- Perth & Kinross 9%.
- Dumfries & Galloway 2%.

This review can see that the development of the taxi priority work has been carried forward primarily by Transport Scotland and MACS, and that progress has been made in:

- stabilising the spread of accessible taxis.
- developing guiding principles and best practice documents.

And the positive impact of this has been that the offering of accessible taxi services has remained stable at approximately 21%. However, many providers do not offer a range of accessible services and vehicles, and there are still gaps across different regions of Scotland. Specifically with key disparities between rural and urban areas, with the majority of taxis being in urban areas. Urban areas tend to have a better ratio of taxi licenses to accessible taxis. Which indicates that whilst the quantity of licenses being distributed across Scotland is increasing, many of these additional taxis are not accessible.

This is a key indicator that the landscape of accessible taxis across Scotland has become more challenging since the Covid-19 pandemic began in 2020. This evidences that there is still a significant amount of work to be done with this area, and that further work needs to be done to incentivise taxi license holders to ensure that their taxis, are accessible.

Closing the gap between these discrepancies would be a key step in narrowing the mobility gap for many disabled people, with a particular positive impact for many disabled people in rural areas, who require taxis in order to complete door-to-door journeys.

The negative impact that Covid-19 has had on taxi services has been felt by disabled people all across Scotland - specifically raised as a key issue for disabled people in rural areas. These issues were raised at a recent ATF focused webinar with some of the comments recorded from this reflecting that:

- Most companies have a lack of access to taxis that can support wheelchair customers.
- It's more expensive to have wheelchair accessible taxis.
- It's more expensive for disabled people to book taxis.
- Before Covid, we were well supplied with taxis (numbers). Now post-Covid, there is a lack of taxis.

South East Scotland (SEStrans) partnership is trialling an app which helps journey planning. This trial includes taxis, which would help with linkages and planning, and access to taxi information.

The above, recent lived-experience testimonies also note that many disabled people use taxis in rural areas in order to reach other transport services.

There are three key actions within the taxi priority and work package based on recent findings of disabled people's use habits of using taxi services to travel:

- To find ways of implementing support, incentives and structures which can mitigate the need for disabled people to use Taxi services where possible, ensuring that public transport services are available, and that Community Transport Services are also used to support gaps in services and additional access requirements.
- To undertake data collection and consultation which provide clear information on the priority actions and changes to implement moving forward and will provide indicators of progress in this area.

Affordability of taxi services as well as lack of access to accessible taxi services is raised as an issue. To look into additional support in this space of accessible taxi service provision due to the cost-of-living crisis.

MACS has been an active advocate for accessible taxis as a priority issue stating:

*“Many disabled people need door-to-door transport and are therefore heavily dependent on taxis (which are used by disabled people approximately twice as much as by non-disabled people). We therefore advocate the setting up a new national taxi scheme, which could be a gold standard scheme for Scotland in promoting accessible travel. It would also increase passenger demand for taxi drivers, many of whom have suffered severe income loss since the pandemic and encourage taxis (and private hire vehicles) to remain viable, especially in marginally profitable rural and island communities.”*

### [MACS Letter to Transport Scotland 28 October 2022](#)

We can see some progress being made within the taxi priority area over its lifespan to date. Specifically, within the work reported by MACS and supported by Transport Scotland, where a collaborative approach resulted in co-signing a letter to all 32 Local Authorities.

The letter invited them to take account of their obligations within the Equalities Act to encourage disability training, whilst promoting the free REAL (Respect, Empathise, Ask and Listen) "Real Passenger, Real Person" training package developed by the Department for Transport. This also invoked the Triple A (Available, Accessible, Affordable) standard for taxis and PHV, as a key provider of transport for the most vulnerable in our society.

### [Work Stream Leaders Top Three Highlights](#)

Further positive developments to this priority were that there was an updated Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards document published in 2020 (for England and Wales).

### [Statutory & Best Practice Guidance for taxi and PHV licensing authorities \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

The Scottish Government first published its Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing Best Practice for Licensing Authorities in 2007. The guidance set out to offer best practice advice to licensing authorities on a range of issues relating to the licensing of taxis, private hire cars and their drivers and was most recently updated in May 2023.

### [Taxi and private hire car licensing: guidance - third edition - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

The 2020 (England and Wales) document notes that consultation at the local level of licensing authorities - specifically when making changes which might impact passengers – should include disabled people and DPOs. This is a positive development, which should be followed up, to look into facilitating consultation exercises as noted in this report recommendation. It would be a positive next step to see Transport Scotland take this further and look at ways of incentivising and trialling consultation activities.

Additionally, in relation to training, the 2020 document states that all those with a licence should be required to undertake sufficient training, with the minimum training required including disability and equality awareness. It further states that:

*“Training should not simply relate to procedures but should include the use of case study material to provide context and real scenarios. All training should be formally recorded by the licensing authority and require a signature from the person that has received the training.”*

Funders such as Scottish Government could offer grants to help taxi firms:

- improve their fleet to include accessible taxis and;
- provide a minimum standard of training around disability and equality awareness.

As stated in the ATF, the number of accessible taxis should increase. However, we can see that from the recent data gathered that there has been a minimal change in numbers over the last three years.

We can see that some key priorities outlined within the framework sit within Area 2 of the ATF. These include:

- Gathering data on best practice and issues identified in both the accessibility of information and the use of taxi services.
- Updated information gathered and put on the Accessible Travel hub.
- An increased effort to look at ways of providing more accessible taxi services in rural areas.
- Beginning work looking at where community transport can provide additional support and reach some of the outcomes set out for taxis.
- A guidance document which directs taxi companies on who to contact for training, advice, what they are required to offer, and best practice examples.

Once this information has been gathered significant progress on developing this work package will have been undertaken and this information can be used to lobby for specific changes and resources.

Example of priorities to take forward from framework issues:

- Make booking of accessible taxis more accessible.
- Taxis to be contactable by SMS, not just a phone number.

It was noted from the ATF poll series that whilst many members had been involved with bus and rail consultation activities, there were several comments made noting the reliance on taxis as an additional and back up support.

However not many references to travel issues related to taxis could be found across the hub portal and further research could be done to provide this.

Current information shows that whilst taxis are a priority area, it is not ranking highly on the priority lists of many disabled people and many of the key stakeholders and transport providers involved in recent years. This is reflected in the Disability and Transport Survey, where Taxi was under 10% of use across all areas of the household survey, indicating that disabled people still find taxis to be inaccessible in many instances.

### [Disability and Transport: Findings from the Scottish Household Survey](#)

Compiling data on taxis should be a priority moving forward. Funds to reach out and contact taxi companies to gather information on what services they offer and ways that disabled people can plan journeys using taxis in various areas around Scotland. This is supported by data gathered during a recent ATF consultation (2022)

**Appendix 1:** Accessible Travel Framework Weekly Poll series October & November 2022.

**Appendix 2:** Discussing the Future of the Accessible Travel Framework Webinar February 2023.

## Community Transport

Community Transport (CT) has been raised in connection with exploring the issues raised in association with taxi and PHV work packages.

CT involvement could assist in mitigating some of the issues raised in completing door-to-door journeys in rural areas, where access to taxis is evidently limited, and many disabled people are not within walking or wheeling distance of the bus or rail services they wish to access.

CT does not play a large role in the outlined priority issues or solutions across the ATF, with only one of the forty-eight issues directly referencing it. However, developing CT directly relates to many issues and priorities raised within the ATF and the subsequent delivery plans and ATF work packages. Particularly when it comes to the intersection of accessible taxis and rural access relating to planning and making door-to-door journeys.

[Going Further: Scotland's Accessible Travel Framework \(pdf\) pp-60](#)

CT has been increasing its reach over recent years, and the Community Transport Association (CTA) published the "More Than a Minibus" report in September 2022 after both quantitative and qualitative research with CTA members across Scotland. This research included:

- Over 51% of CT operators serve disabled people.
- Over 54% of CT operators serve older people.
- 68% of the whole CT fleet is accessible.
- Over 802,000 passengers in Scotland in 2021.
- 44% of CT operators are rural, with 10% on islands.
- Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme (MiDAS) most common training delivered to CT drivers by half of all CT operators.
- 26% of CT operators don't have a website – bookings largely focused through phone across the sector.
- Over 4% deliver mobility scooter and/or wheelchair loan service.

We can see from some recent polls where CT has been raised as an option, where individuals have been unable to access other forms of transport - or there have been no available accessible taxis.

Areas for further development could include:

- To support CTA through advertising and awareness raising in the first instance.
- To meet with and devise support plans to involve CT providers into the work of the ATF.
- To update CT information on the Accessible Travel Hub.

Further feedback and comment have been received from disabled people in regard to issues relating to Community Transport (Appendix 2: Discussing the Future of the Accessible Travel Framework Webinar February 2023):



- CT groups experience difficulty in obtaining blue badges.
- The CTA was very important, with disabled people sharing positive experiences.
- CTA was suffering from a lack of volunteers, as many volunteers are retired. This is impacted by retirement age going up and opportunities for retirement going down.
- Lack of communication and advertising for CTA is a huge issue - people don't know they are available or where or how to book.
- There is not adequate funding for voluntary groups to support them.
- Marketing support for CTA – ways of marketing in connection and support with other transport modes to support multi-modal and linking journeys – supporting journey planning with CTA.
- There should be a database and marketing for journey planning with community transport.
- Active travel and CTA company options should be more widely supported and known about (Appendix 2: Discussing the Future of the Accessible Travel Framework Webinar February 2023).

As a wider finding, many of the issues arising from the gaps within accessible taxi offerings could potentially be developed and supported by CT offerings.

## Consultation and co-production

Consultation has been clearly set at the heart of the ethos of the ATF, with the fifth and sixth areas of the ATF underpinning these priority themes:

- Area 5: Co-production of transport policy and practices.
- Area 6: Sharing experiences, feedback, knowledge, and learning.

Both these areas are vital to the overall progress of the ATF goals, as both areas sit at the centre of the ethos of the ATF intentions.

Noted in the four-part poll series for the ATF is that consultation is highly valued and that active consultation, which involves disabled people throughout planning, implementation and monitoring phases of a project's lifespan can be of significant value. These are priorities to uphold and practice across all other areas of the ATF work packages.

It may be pertinent to consider some of the key outcomes from the National Transport Strategy (NTS) and align priorities and recommendations accordingly - specifically with the practices of co-production and consultation - which need to come to the forefront of the ATF's work moving forward into its last few years.

A core component of any consultation process will be channels of inclusive communication.

This review finds that there are no clear indicators, monitors, or goals set to indicate success or progress working towards the goals of consultation and knowledge sharing. Moving forward, setting measurable targets for how meaningful and on-going consultation work is going to take place (in connection with the ATF) will be vital in subsequent assessments of the progress on these work packages.

Inclusive communication formats, including Easy Read, large print, Braille, sign language interpreted video, are vital for many disabled people in order for them to independently access information and communicate with transport providers.

It is a measure of progress that some 82% of disabled people completing the Disability and Transport survey found it easy to access information.

### Public transport

This is supported through recent online events and polls, where respondents were asked about the availability of accessible information and Easy Read. The responses from a DES poll (2022) show that the majority of those responding noted that they did receive information from business and public services in formats that met their accessibility requirements.

### [Weekly Poll – Accessible Information and Easy Read \(Week Beginning 2 May 2022\) - Disability Equality Scotland](#)

That said, some 75% of respondents noted that they were not aware of business or public services that offer information in an Easy Read format. This data is reinforced through a number of recent polls and online events where disabled people repeatedly share experiences which echo these results.

This reflects that there is significant progress yet to be made in this area, as it relates back to facilitating and ensuring productive consultation, feedback, and knowledge sharing opportunities, and alongside other vital priority areas such as journey planning and wayfinding.

Easy read and inclusive communication formats come underneath Transport Scotland's Journey Planning priority, outlined in the [Accessible Travel Annual Delivery Plan 2021-22 \(pdf\)](#)

This states that their aim was to:

*“Promote and raise awareness of technology and initiatives that provide passengers with timely and up to date information to help them to make informed decisions in order to complete their journey”*

However, within the scope outlined in Transport Scotland's Journey Planning plans and actions, we can see that this is only one aspect of the journey planning experience.

From engaging with feedback surrounding journey planning, whilst this area is still seen as a high priority area to be continuously developed, the needs and barriers raised have changed due to the external factors of the Covid-19 pandemic, alongside other factors. We can see from testimonial data that the priority actions have shifted slightly away from providing journey planning information digitally.

In more recent data collection (October/November 2022), many disabled people noted that access to staff in-person at stations, live text, timetables and signage at bus stop and stations, along with a telephone line would all be key improvements to many people's abilities to access information and communicate effectively with transport providers.

Many individuals have cited the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic as a root cause to many staff reductions, information desk and station closures - which have severely impacted their ability to and confidence in travel in the last two years.

Areas for further development identified by disabled people included:

- The Accessible Travel Hub.
- Inclusive communication formats.
- Consistency of information being distributed by transport providers.

These issues have been repeatedly raised since the beginning of the ATF in 2016.

When the Accessible Travel Hub was first proposed and reported on in 2016, DES noted that its core purpose was to begin to mitigate some of the above issues.

*“One of the key things we have found throughout the process has been a lack of awareness of things like the legal rights of disabled people to accessible travel, but also the various support mechanisms and guidance which already exists. SDEF will also develop and host an online hub – [accessibletravel.scot](https://accessibletravel.scot) – which aims to draw together up-to-date information about all aspects of transport accessibility in a one-stop-shop so that everyone can learn from good practice, make connections, and share their work. SDEF will also publish a newsletter in accessible formats to keep people up to date with what is happening as we implement this Framework.”*

Recent data shows that these issues are still very common to this day, and that further progress needs to be made in these areas. However, in order for the Hub to perform effectively, it requires further support from transport providers through the provision of more up-to-date information.

## Active and sustainable travel

This review finds that throughout the recent data collection, there has been a significant increase in disabled people raising active and sustainable travel as a priority moving forwards.

This is partially to do with wider impactful changes occurring across Scotland, and the UK at large in relation to the climate crisis, and the shifting landscape of the needs of travel and transportation across Scotland.

An example of this being at an online event discussing the future of the ATF (February 2023), where many participants articulated issues and concerns relating to the forthcoming implementation of Low Emission Zones in June 2023. Arising from this event and the feedback received, a separate, specific webinar for issues and queries pertaining to Low Emission Zones was organised.

This is a positive development in consultation and receptive engagement, particularly relating to contemporary travel issues such as Low Emission Zones and Blue Badges.

The report finds that regional events and engagement exercises specifically pertaining to areas of the NTS2, particularly the areas of sustainable travel, need further consultation work.

This report can also see that in order to align with the sustainable and active travel plans outlined in the National Transport Strategy, there is further work to be done to consult with and consider appropriate actions and implementation plans, which work towards the goals outlined in the NTS2. These should ensure consideration of the needs of disabled people and awareness of the impacts of key actions, finding ways to ensure that these goals can be reached an inclusive and accessible manner, with disabled people's needs at the forefront.

### [Sustainable travel and the National Transport Strategy](#)

As these changes are proactively moved towards there is an anticipated increase in disabled people using public transport to go to work. It therefore becomes more imperative than ever that transport providers improve their accessibility services and overall travel experience for disabled passengers.

By evidencing improved quality of services, more disabled people will feel confident using public transport for their commutes, and this will further work towards this identified goal in the NTS2.

Active and sustainable travel goals in the NTS2 also intersect numerous priority areas already identified in Transport Scotland's annual delivery plans.

The rural focus which Transport Scotland highlighted in the 2021 delivery plan requires further development with specific measures and indicators put in place, which relate to data collection channels which engage with disabled people living in rural areas of Scotland.

As the work of the ATF adapts to reflect the priorities of disabled people in the current travel/transport landscape, the rural focus and its initiatives will evolve - with work such as the 20-minute neighbourhood initiatives.

Feedback on these developments are archived via the DES weekly polls. In these, many disabled people noted the benefits of moving towards this goal in order to work towards wider NTS2 goals. However, they noted that they felt this would be difficult to initiate in rural parts of Scotland where there are significant issues when it comes to accessing amenities and utilising public transport.

#### [Weekly Poll – 20-minute Neighbourhoods \(Week Beginning 9 November 2020\) - Disability Equality Scotland](#)

We can see that through both national and regional strategy documents published in the last two years, the majority of these focus on the move towards accessible sustainable travel goals, noted in the NEStrans Regional Strategy for example.

#### [Regional Transport Strategy | Nestrans](#)

This regional strategy document marks a positive change in the development of action plans toward these overarching goals at a regional level. This review finds that it would be of benefit to work with Access Panels in different regions and create qualitative indicators, in collaboration with them, as a way of monitoring, developing, and supporting the development of these priority areas as they intersect and progress.

Another positive example of this shift being the receptive work on issues in relation to Low Emission Zones (LEZ). There has been positive consultation activities with members of Transport Scotland's Accessible Travel Policy Team, with receptive engagement over LEZ issues recently identified at an online event hosted by DES and Transport Scotland.

Recent engagement exercises by DES indicate that Low Emission Zones and other issues relating to sustainable travel initiatives will increase as priority issues in the next few years. Previous poll data has indicated that disabled people are seeking an active voice in active and sustainable travel projects. The review finds that regional events and regional engagement exercises relating to these developing priority areas would be of benefit moving forward.

We can also see that in order to align with the sustainable and active travel plans outlined in the Sustainable Travel and the National Transport Strategy an increase in disabled people using public transport to go to work is expected. This further increases the need to develop strong accessible public transport services to support this anticipated increase in use.

Some respondents noted that consideration and thoughtful inclusion of disabled people's voices and experiences in the active and sustainable travel strategies and plans moving forward, would be a positive indicator of success, with reasonable adjustments put in place relating to active travel plan implementation and planning.

## Clear Pathways

The active and sustainable travel priorities - specifically as they relate to disabled people - also intersect with the clear pathways work packages - as street clutter, uneven pathways and many other issues are barriers to disabled people to participate in active travel, walking and wheeling.

This aspect will also intersect with the active and sustainable travel goals of the NTS2, and this also notes further increases in disabled people walking and wheeling to work, to meet friends and family, and access resources.

This review notes that Clear Pathways and Journey Planning are both vital priority areas that have been worked towards over the lifespan of the ATF. However, it is out with the scope of this report to cover them both in significant detail.

This review finds that Clear Pathways indicators, as evidence in the ATF, includes:

- Ensuring paths are clear, safe, and obstacle-free;
- Research/Develop local clear path strategies aimed at removing unnecessary street furniture and providing an accessible streetscape for everyone, and develop a tool to educate people about the impact of obstructions on disabled people;
- Solid structures with good accountability and clear pathways to local bodies and Scottish Government as this will help to effect change on a local and national level;
- Ensure paths are clear of obstructions like bollards, road works and wheelie bins and are accessible for all.

[Going Further: Scotland's Accessible Travel Framework](#) (see pages-53, 56 and 59)

However, the original ATF and planning documents have not provided clear SMART measurable indicators of progress relating to the above points. A key barrier to clarifying and analysing impacts with these work packages being that annual data collection points for these issues both nationally and regionally have not been clearly outlined and annually or bi-annually implemented.

Alongside additional planning documents, shared barriers, and priorities from recent lived experience data, and from identifying intersection with other key strategic documents, we can see that Clear Pathways has developed significantly since the start of the ATF. It should be noted that the review found it challenging to identify and track stakeholder organisations who carry forward actions in this area.

As part of looking into the success and impacts pertaining to the on-going clear pathway priority and in order to gather some responses on various areas that impact this priority, this review used the summary reports from various weekly polls undertaken to gather some data on the recent impacts and changes in the landscape of travel in Scotland.

Recent impacts in this area which DES members have shared experience of and feedback on are in relation to 20-minute neighbourhoods (November 2020). A 20-minute neighbourhood means having all your basic needs – shops, health centres, work opportunities, and recreation - within a mile of where you live and close enough to walk or wheel.

The majority of respondents stated that they could not access local services in their community within a 20-minute walk or wheel from where they live. Many respondents commented in the poll that the built environment in their local area(s) were still quite inaccessible, and this limited their access to these resources. Whilst respondents recognised the benefits that can be gained from having key services within a walking and wheeling distance, on a practical level, this is challenging due to the inaccessible nature of the built and natural environment. Disabled people raised concerns about poor pavement infrastructure, lack of dropped kerbs and safe crossing places.

The respondents raised on-going concerns pertaining to poor pavement infrastructure, lack of dropped kerbs and safe crossing places. This would indicate that there has not been a significant impact in the built environment accessibility as part of the clear pathways priority within the annual delivery plan.

Clear Pathways has been a priority identified by Transport Scotland in their recent Annual Delivery plan, however the priority remains an on-going concern, with many issues remaining unsuccessfully resolved at least within the specific consultation(s) conducted by DES. Street clutter specifically, was raised as a key issue still being frequently experienced.

Disabled people continue to face ongoing challenges accessing key services due to obstructions on pavements created by street clutter, such as café furniture, street signs, A-boards, bollards, and wheelie bins. Pavement obstructions can force wheelchair and scooter users, visually impaired people, and people with pushchairs onto the road and into the path of oncoming traffic.

In the Clear Pathways report in Transport Scotland's annual delivery plan of 2021, it became evident that there were a vast number of organisations who all need to feed into one another and work collaboratively to achieve the goals of this priority.

Some of the key stakeholders identified in Transport Scotland's report being:

- Guide Dogs.
- Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB).
- Mobility and Access Committee Scotland (MACS).
- Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS).
- Disability Equality Scotland (DES).

The summary report concluded that there were still many barriers arising out of issues of clear pathways, which shows that this priority is still an on-going area of concern. Indeed, for many disabled people, street clutter has increased as an issue over the last few years.



A DES poll conducted in 2021 reflected that the overwhelming majority of respondents (96%) had found it more difficult to navigate town and city centres due to an increase in street clutter. As part of these particular transport-related issues, it was further noted that obstructions with parked vehicles were also a concern.

### [Weekly Poll – Street Clutter \(Week Beginning 21 June 2021\) - Disability Equality Scotland\)](#)

One positive development in this area was noted to be Spaces for People. This was a temporary infrastructure programme that was first introduced in April 2020, to provide additional space for physical distancing for people to walk, wheel or cycle while COVID-19 restrictions remain in place. Examples of the measures taken included the introduction of temporary cycle lanes, extensions to pavements, roads closed to traffic and removal of parking and loading spaces.

However, a DES poll (September 2020) found that 77% (333 respondents), believed Spaces for People changes had made it more difficult to get around local streets and town centres, with respondents sharing their concerns regarding the programme.

Many respondents to the poll stated that they felt the Covid-19 pandemic and changes to public spaces had negatively impacted this issue and caused more street clutter than before.

*“Sadly, COVID has brought a complete change with many streets cluttered with eatery tables, trader’s boards, adverts tied to the many items of street furniture which themselves are a hazard. My wife is in a wheelchair which I have to manoeuvre around these.”*

It is evident from the lack of monitoring data that there is further work to be done in developing indicators for this area as Transport Scotland works closely with DPOs and other stakeholders, to progress this work package. This is particularly important as current data around walking and wheeling reflect trends in increased use of walking/wheeling to get to work and shops.

This review proposes putting in place key data collection points to monitor progress in this area, and support those implementing changes. In particular:

- How actions will be monitored.
- How many issues have been reported across different regions.
- How local authorities have acted on reported issues.

It is appreciated that this area will be partially impacted by the interconnected nature of this priority with the work packages of the Active and Sustainable Strategies moving forward with the plans of the NTS2.

[national-transport-strategy.pdf](#)

## Conclusion

This review was set up to consider how the Accessible Travel Framework (ATF) has been developed and delivered, since its publication in 2016.

At this point it may be worth reflecting that the overarching vision of the original document was, that “all disabled people can travel with the same freedom of choice and dignity as other citizens.”

Therefore, the review has used the lived experience and testimony of disabled people in Scotland to consider the impact, priorities, and changes to experiences of travel in Scotland, through the implementation of the ATF. To this end, the review has collated information, data, experiences and impacts from disabled people across Scotland in relation to their travel experiences.

The review recognises that there have been a number of confounding variables in relation to the implementation of the ATF and to transport in Scotland more generally – particularly over recent years – including (though not exclusively):

- The Covid-19 pandemic.
- Strike action across transport companies.
- The cost-of-living crisis.
- The climate crisis.
- The energy crisis.

It is also recognised that ‘transport’ encompasses a wide expanse of integrated components, including (as examples): Clear Pathways; Hate Crime; Journeying between different modes of transport; and Journey Planning. Although relatively easy to approach the development of such examples in isolation, the reality for the disabled person is that these components are very often inter-linked.

Elsewhere within the review, key recommendations are identified and recorded, and it is not the intention to repeat these at this point. That said, there are some more general observations to highlight.

Reflecting on the evidence generated by the review, it is accepted that some progress has been made across some of the ATF priority actions put forward in the last five years. However, a reasonable question to pose is whether such progress has been significant in nature.

It is also recognised that strong developments have been made in recent years to improve the experience of accessing transport services - however it is acknowledged that passenger assistance and staff training remain vital to be carried forward and enhanced further.

Effective and open consultation and co-production practices need to be upheld and implemented - across all areas of the ATF - in order to ensure that the lived

experience of disabled people can be actively and effectively utilised as a guide to creating indicators and progress measures of the ATF.

Overall, the review found there to be a general lack of information (data), concerning the implementation of the Accessible Travel Framework (ATF) to date.

Many surveys and data collection systems have not been linked to the action plans created, used to annually reflect improvements, or used to indicate meaningful progress. There is further work to be done to make connections across existing data collection strands and to ensure that changes are made to existing data channels, which can go on to inform continuous evaluation of ATF work packages moving forward.

Additionally, there is not sufficient regional data collection or consultation exercises, and this review finds that some of the regional baseline data collection exercises created are no longer running or have not been revisited since before the Covid-19 pandemic.

Similarly, there is a general reflection from the data obtained, that disabled people travelling in Scotland are still experiencing issues surrounding access to consistent and clear information. Indeed, this review finds that many accessible services are not consistently offered across Scotland, culminating in a lack of support for door-to-door travel – particularly so within a rural context.

This review is both reflective and forward looking. To that end, it is suggested that for the remainder of the current ATF lifespan, to build in qualitative, experience-centred success or progress indicators in all priorities and ensuring that these indicators are gathered annually as required by all stakeholders.

This will provide a method of assessing the impacts on the experiences of disabled people and values of progress moving forward. Many respondents have articulated that strong feedback and consultation mechanisms being put in place would be a crucial sign of successful progression and would be a vital positive sign of change.

This review finds that some of the original ATF indicators have not been upheld or continued to be collected via Transport Focus passenger surveys - or are no longer a pressing concern frequently raised.

The review finds the ATF issues identified and actions to carry forward have not always been constructed to meet SMART measures. Whilst they are an accurate depiction of priority issues at that time, they were not constructed in a way which allowed for the adaption and response to changing concerns.

Overall, there is a need for a shift in approach and language of project documents, moving away from progress or completion, to progress and on-going development/continuation in consultation with disabled people and DPOs.

Providing accessible travel to all disabled people across Scotland and continuously working collaboratively on this aim will be an on-going body of work. The aim of project documents such as the ATF should be to guide, augment and provide markers for the direction of this on-going work.

This shift in ethos will be paramount to the development of the new framework and other project documents moving forward within the work of closing the mobility gap in Scotland.

Consultation respondents have noted that accessibility to them is about choice. Therefore, moving forward, offering disabled people as much choice as possible, to ensure they can participate as it suits them, would allow for further autonomy within the experience of travel.

Finally, transport services, travel support and assistance which allow individual disabled people to travel independently - without the need for a companion, or without having to notify members of staff – would be viewed as a true success for the ATF and an improvement for disabled people.

## Glossary of terms

ADP:	Annual Delivery Plan
ATF:	Accessible Travel Framework
ATS:	Accessible Travel Steering Group
CT:	Community Transport
CTA:	Community Transport Association
DES:	Disability Equality Scotland
DPO:	Disabled Persons Organisation
KPI:	Key Performance Indicator
LEZ:	Low Emission Zones
LPEG:	Longitudinal Progress Evaluation Group
MACS:	Mobility and Access Committee (Scotland)
NEC:	National Entitlement Card
NTS:	National Transport Strategy
ORR:	Office of Road and Rail
OSR:	Office of Statistic Regulation
PHV:	Private Hire Vehicle
RNIB	Royal National Institute for the Blind
SCOTS:	Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland
SMART:	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound.

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