

Introduction

- This transport accessibility guide is designed to be an accessible overview of key information, advice and support resources and services available to members of the general public with a disability when planning travel or wishing to know more about transport in general.
- It was compiled based largely on the content contained within the comprehensive [Place to Place](#) web guide developed by the [Scottish Accessible Transport Alliance \(SATA\)](#) which readers can consult should they seek any further information or technical details .
- [Place to Place](#) has been produced by Alan Rees MBE, assisted by David Hunter and Mike Harrison.

Disability and Transport

Background Information

- A disabled person is defined under the [Equality Act 2010](#) as someone with a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities. In the public transport context this generally means having the ability to travel and use transport services.
- In relation to transport, making the system accessible means overcoming the barriers which can prevent or make it difficult for people with impairments to travel. Barriers can be physical, but can also be related to attitudes and communication issues¹.

Key Facts

- Based on data collected for the 2013 and 2014 Scottish Household Survey, 22.3% of the Scottish population have a long term condition which limits their ability to do day-to-day activities.
- Analysis of the 2014 Scottish Household Survey found that:
 - For each age group, people with limiting disabilities are less likely to travel compared to non-disabled people – 59% of people with a limiting disability had made a journey the previous day compared to 80% of those with no disability.
 - 16% of people with a limiting disability reported that their health prevented them from using trains more and 32% reported that their health prevented them from using buses more.
 - However, analysis of the 2013 and 2014 Scottish Household Survey found that people with a limiting disability used the bus in similar frequencies to the Scottish population, but tended to use the train less frequently than the general population.
 - People with mental health difficulties find it easier to use trains as opposed to buses – of people with a mental health problem, 9% said that nothing discouraged them from using the bus more often compared to 15% saying that nothing discouraged them from using the train. 30% of people with a mental health problem said that health problems discouraged them from using a bus compared to 13% saying that health problems discouraged them from using a train.

¹ For more info, see for example: <http://www.scope.org.uk/about-us/our-brand/social-model-of-disability>

- 65% of disabled people never drive compared to 35% for all Scottish adults.
- 53% of people with a limiting disability had a bus concessionary travel card.
- Transport Scotland's engagement with disabled people and disabled people's organisations to inform the work on the forthcoming accessible travel action plan led to the recognition that issues around the accessibility of transport can relate to (amongst other things):
 - The provision of accessible infrastructure, services and information;
 - The need for the right support networks to be available where required;
 - The issues that can arise across the course of a journey (including door to transport or transport to destination, and switching from one service or transport mode to another); and
 - The knowledge, attitudes and behaviour of transport operators (including drivers) and other travellers.
- Furthermore, a Scottish Government [review](#) into evidence² around disability found that:
 - Approximately a third of disabled adults said that they experienced difficulty using local buses – with problems around availability, cost, difficulty getting in and out of transport, difficulty getting to and from the stop or station, and anxiety or lack of confidence.
 - Approximately a quarter of disabled adults reported difficulty using taxis, with cost being by far the most common barrier.
 - Many disabled people felt that rail travel was inaccessible, due to issues with physical accessibility and staff attitudes and training.

Key Legislation and Policy

- The key legislation in relation to disability in the UK is the [Equality Act 2010](#), which simplified the law regarding discrimination, by bringing together 116 pieces of legislation, including the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 .
- The Act makes it unlawful to discriminate in the provision of goods, facilities and premises including transport services. It covers such things as information and ticketing as well as infrastructure such as waiting rooms at airports, ferry terminals, bus stations and railway stations.
- Essentially, the legislation means that disabled people (and people with other protected characteristics) should be able to enjoy the same rights, choices

² As also outlined in the following report:

http://www.transport.gov.scot/sites/default/files/documents/rrd_reports/uploaded_reports/j383612/j383612.pdf

and opportunities as non-disabled people, including to use the whole transport system.

- Under reserved and devolved powers, the parliaments in Westminster and Holyrood have enacted legislation to give effect to this policy, notably the Disability Discrimination Acts in 1995 and 2005, the Equality Act 2010, and the Transport (Scotland) Acts of 2001 and 2005.
- The [Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland](#) (MACS) provides advice to Scottish Ministers on the planning and regulation of transport facilities to ensure that they are accessible for those with a disability. Since its establishment in 2002, Annual Reports, meeting minutes and other documents are published on its website.
- [Transport Scotland](#) (the Scottish Government's transport agency) has also recently been working with disabled individuals, disabled people's organisations and transport providers to develop a transport accessibility action plan which will aim to improve the accessibility of transport over the next 10 years.
- The [Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee](#) (DPTAC) advises the UK Government on transport issues in a similar way to MACS. The Department for Transport is also taking forward various research projects into accessible transport and has also produced an action plan.
- There are also European (EU) and international regulations which protect the rights of disabled people in relation to transport and more generally, for instance the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#).
- For general information on disability rights in the UK see the [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#).

Transport Environment and Infrastructure

General Information

- [Transport Scotland](#) provides information on government projects, public transport and access to a wide range of services by road, rail, water and air as well as cycling and walking.
- Under the [Equality Act 2010](#), local authorities must consider the needs of disabled people concerning the design and maintenance of streets.
- The [Scottish Disability Equality Forum](#) (SDEF) is a government-funded disability-led charity supporting local Access Panels to address access issues and monitor plans for new and adapted buildings and infrastructure including those that are transport related.
- [Guide Dogs](#) have campaigned against street clutter, pavement parking and streets with level surfaces which are shared between pedestrians and motorists and which blind and partially sighted people find hard to negotiate.
- The [OPENspace Research Centre](#) at the Edinburgh College of Art has a number of publications about access in the countryside.

Walking

- The Scottish Government published its [National Walking Strategy](#) in 2014 in which accessible walking for all is a key objective.
- A [bill](#) to restrict parking on kerbs and pavements and double parking was introduced to the Scottish Parliament in 2015 and is expected to become law. The proposed law is supported by a range of charities and it is believed that ensuring pavements are free from obstructions will make them more accessible.
- [The Fieldfare Trust](#) promotes countryside access for disabled people by providing advice and training services backed by research. National Standards for accessibility are set under the [BT Countryside for All projects](#).

Cycling

- The National Cycle Network (often known as the NCN) is a network of traffic-free paths and on-road cycling and walking routes that connect towns and cities in Scotland and the rest of the UK. [Sustrans](#) plays an important role in the development of the NCN. An [online mapping tool](#) shows where NCN is currently in place.
- In 2013 the Scottish Government published a refreshed [Cycling Action Plan for Scotland](#) to provide an updated delivery framework and set out actions to help to increase the level of Cycling in Scotland.

- [Cycling Scotland](#) is funded by Transport Scotland to promote cycling opportunities in Scotland and provide people with the skills required to undertake safe cycling, by offering training amongst other services. Cycling Scotland plays a key role in the delivery and monitoring of the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland.

Car Parking

- The Blue Badge scheme provides a national arrangement of parking concessions for people with severe walking difficulties who travel either as drivers or passengers. The scheme also applies to registered blind people and people with severe upper limb impairments who regularly drive vehicle but cannot turn a steering wheel by hand.
- It generally allows badge holders to park close to their destination but certain conditions must be met (e.g. displaying the badge or not parking where there is a ban on loading and unloading).
- Recommendations for car parking spaces are given in [Inclusive Mobility](#) that provision should be made for Blue Badge holders wherever conventional parking spaces are provided.”
- For general information and to apply visit:
www.scotland.gov.uk/topics/transport/road/BlueBadgeScheme.
- The availability of public parking is a matter for local authorities. This includes parking at rail stations, although the Scottish Government has produced a [Rail Station Parking Strategy](#).
- For travel abroad, the [AA website](#) and the [FIA website](#) provide useful information.
- An [online map](#) of blue badges spaces is available for some towns and cities.

Taxi Ranks

- Recommendations for taxi ranks are given in [Inclusive Mobility](#):
 - Wherever feasible taxi ranks should be provided close to railway, bus and coach stations and all major attractions, such as retail areas.
 - They should be well signposted and allow passengers to board from the footway onto the nearside of the vehicle. The provision of ranks for licensed taxis is a local government responsibility. Private hire cars are not able to use them and must be pre-booked.
 - If the rank does not have taxis regularly standing at certain times, the sign should state what these times are and give telephone number(s) for calling a taxi. Embossed information of this type would assist blind and partially sighted people.

Bus Stops

- [Inclusive Mobility](#) recommends that in residential area stops should be located so that nobody is required to walk more than 400 metres from home.
- It also provides details on bus stop and shelter design, seating and timetable information.

Transport-related Buildings

General Information

- Recommendations for access to and within transport related buildings, together with facilities within or associated with them, are given in [Inclusive Mobility](#).

Rail Stations

- Standards for rail stations and their facilities are set out [Design Standards for Accessible Railway Stations](#) Code of Practice produced by Transport Scotland and the Department for Transport. It has been published to ensure that any infrastructure work at stations makes railway travel easier for disabled passengers.
- In recent years, station improvement programmes have been delivered by the Department for Transport and Transport Scotland to increase the accessibility of stations. This in addition to improvements delivered through franchising, major projects, investment in rolling stock, maintenance and renewal.
- Under the terms of their franchises, train operators are required to produce and annually revise *Disabled People's Protection Policies* (DPPPs).
- The current [ScotRail](#) Franchise (operator of almost all trains within Scotland) is Abellio. The franchisee is operationally responsible for 347 of the stations in Scotland owned by Network Rail. ScotRail has a [Disabled Persons Protection Policy](#) which provides information on the steps in place to ensure the needs of disabled passengers are met.
- Network Rail is directly responsible for the management of Edinburgh Waverley and Glasgow Central and also has a [Disabled People's Protection Policy](#) for its managed stations.
- [Dunbar station](#) is managed by Virgin Trains East Coast.
- The [Association of Train Operating Companies](#) (ATOC) provides information on the accessibility of stations and services operated by all UK rail transport operators and details can be obtained through [National Rail Enquires](#).
- For information on parking at train stations, please click [here](#) [link to other page – see section above]

Sea Ports and Terminals

- In 2000 the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC) published [The design of large passenger ships and passenger infrastructure: guidance on meeting the needs of disabled people](#). It covered in some details access to and within terminals as well as pre-journey information, shore to

vessel transition, lights, steps, stairs and ramps on vessels, information and announcements, management and training.

- [Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd](#) (CMAL) is responsible for the vessels, ports and infrastructure used by [Caledonian MacBrayne Ferries Ltd](#) (CalMac) the major operator of services to the Scottish islands.
- Serco Group PLC holds the franchise to operate [NorthLink Ferries](#) to Orkney and Shetland from Aberdeen and Scrabster. Details of their accessibility provisions can be accessed on their [website](#).

Airports

- Since July 2008, European legislation on air travel has meant that airports have to provide services that enable disabled passengers to board, disembark and transit between flights.
- The links below take you to information provided for disabled passengers by Scotland's main airports:
 - [Aberdeen Airport](#)
 - [Edinburgh Airport](#)
 - [Glasgow Airport](#)
 - [Glasgow Prestwick Airport](#)
 - [Highlands and Islands Airports Ltd](#) operate 11 other airports, including [Inverness Airport](#) and [Dundee Airport](#)
- Under European legislation no-one should be refused travel on a commercial flight to or from Scotland on the basis of their disability or reduced mobility, subject to legitimate air safety considerations. Airlines are responsible for assistance on board the aircraft.
- To allow the airlines to make any necessary alternative arrangements, you should give them as much notice as possible. This usually means telling them about your particular needs when you are making your booking.
- The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) also provides helpful [guidance](#) for disabled passengers and provides links for further assistance information made available by airports and airlines in the UK.

Transport Connections

- Ideally terminals should be located near each other to provide easy interchange between road, rail, sea and air services.
- Where at a distance, special links and arrangements can facilitate interchange between them, for instance fully wheelchair accessible bus and coach services between city centres and airports, or the [Tram](#) service in Edinburgh.

Aids to Mobility

Signage, Information and Lighting

- [Inclusive Mobility](#) stresses the importance of clear, well-positioned signs directing people to services and facilities, including information such as distances.
- Audible information is essential for those with visual impairment and lighting can have both positive and negative effects depending on the nature of an individuals' impairment.
- The RNIB has developed the [REACT](#) guidance system for blind and sight impaired people and has been installed on rail stations, bus stops and other transport facilities.

Walking aids

- Information on walking aids can be accessed [here](#).

Wheelchairs

- Information on manual and electric wheelchairs can be found [here](#). Specific information on electric wheelchairs and mobility scooters is available on the RICA [website](#).

Modes of transport and accessibility

In this section you will find information on how to make different modes of transport more accessible. Information is arranged by mode of transport, with a separate subsection dealing with community transport.

General information on using wheelchairs on public transport

- If you've never used a wheelchair on public transport before or would like to get more information on how to do so safely, [RICA](#) website provides some basic information that also covers maintenance of your wheelchair and ensuring that it is stable.
- The same website also offers [information on your legal rights](#) when using wheelchairs on public transport.
- More detailed information about using wheelchairs on public transport, including details of manufacturers and models can be found in the 'Wheels within Wheels' [publication](#).

General information on using powered wheelchairs on public transport

A lot of useful information on using powered wheelchairs would have been covered in the above subsection dealing with wheelchairs in general. For more specific information we provide a number of links below.

- An accessible and user friendly introduction to using powered wheelchairs and mobility scooters on public transport, including further useful links, can be found on the [Motability website](#). The Motability Scheme enables disabled people to use their government-funded mobility allowance to lease a new car, scooter or powered wheelchair and their website provides useful general information on using all of those modes of transport.
- The National Federation of Shopmobility website allows you to [search](#) for Shopmobility schemes in towns and shopping centres around the country.
- Specific advice on using powered wheelchairs and mobility scooters including information on relevant legislation can be found in the [guidance document](#) published by the Department for Transport.

Cars

- ['Choosing a car'](#) contains useful information on what needs to be considered when buying a car for passengers or drivers with specific accessibility requirements.
- The Motability Scheme enables disabled people to use their government-funded mobility allowance to lease a new car, scooter or powered wheelchair and their

website provides useful general information on using all of those modes of transport. A section of the [Motability website](#) contains information on choosing the right car.

- [Disabled Motoring UK](#) is a charity that supports disabled drivers and passengers and has plenty of useful information for disabled motorists on its website. This includes information on second-hand wheelchair adapted vehicles and alternatives to Motability for those who may not be eligible for the scheme.
- [Mobility Centres](#) around the UK offer professional advice and assessment to individuals who have a medical condition that may affect their ability to drive or access a motor vehicle.
- In Scotland, those living in the Borders, Fife and Lothian areas can access the Southeast Mobility and Rehabilitation Technology Centre ([SMART](#)) which carries out Blue Badge assessments and provides impartial advice on equipment for those with mobility difficulties. There is also one mobility centre in East Kilbride and in Glasgow. The SMART centre in Edinburgh is provided by the NHS and also contains the Scottish resource for driving assessment.
- The local authority-run [Blue Badge](#) scheme is for drivers or passengers with severe mobility problems. The scheme provides a range of on-street parking concessions enabling Blue Badge holders to park closer to where they need to go.

On-demand and community transport

On-demand transport (also known as demand responsive - DRT) services use a variety of vehicles and cover dial-a-ride, dial-a-bus, ring and ride and flexible route bus services. Many of those are targeted to service elderly and mobility impaired passengers. While some services may be operated by local authorities, most will be provided through charities as community transport.

- The **Community Transport Association** provides a useful [tool](#) that allows you to search for community transport providers in your area.

Minibuses

At the time of writing there was no all-embracing legislation covering accessibility specifications for the small bus sector.

The Community Transport Association (CTA) has a range of [information leaflets](#) specifically targeted at minibus users and operators but these are available to registered members only (registration is free of charge on the CTA website).

Buses and coaches

- Public Service Accessibility Regulations (2000) detail the accessibility requirements that need to be met by all bus and coach providers. These changes are compulsory for all single decker buses from 2016 and will affect all double decker buses and coaches by 2020. Citizen's Advice Scotland have produced a [short summary](#) of all the implications for disabled users and how to complain in case standards are not met.
- Public Service Accessibility Regulations (2000) were last updated in 2002. This [summary document](#) from the Department of Transport provides an accessible summary of the amended regulations.

Some of the main changes that the amendment introduced were that:

- a driver, inspector or conductor must permit a disabled person to board and travel on a vehicle with a suitably trained dog
- the driver, inspector or conductor of the vehicle has no right to direct a disabled person to leave the vehicle if they do so solely on the grounds of the person being disabled

Accessibility standards for land based public transport vehicles have been determined:

- since December 1998 trains adapted or new have had to be compliant
- since December 2000 all new single and double decker buses as well as coaches with more than 22 seats have had to be accessible to ambulant disabled and sensory impaired people
- since January 2005 all new buses and coaches have had to be accessible to wheelchair users
- since 2015 all single deck buses less than 7.5 tonnes have had to be compliant
- by 2016 all single deck buses more than 7.5 tonnes have had to be compliant
- by 2017 all double deck buses will have to be compliant
- by January 2020 all single and double deck coaches will have to be compliant.

Individual bus and coach operators provide their own guidelines for using their services, prepared with disabled passengers in mind. The following examples of websites aimed at disabled users are from [Lothian Buses in Edinburgh](#) and [National Express](#) operating nationwide.

Trains

- Information on using wheelchairs on rail services throughout the country can be found on the National Rail [website](#).
- ScotRail provides [further information](#) on how passengers with disabilities can prepare for their journey as well as what assistance can be expected at the stations and on board their trains.
- Transport Scotland has a dedicated [rail accessibility page](#) on its websites where information on adapting the rail network for use by disabled passengers is provided.

Trams

- Edinburgh operates the only tram service in Scotland. Information on accessibility can be accessed by using the [Edinburgh Trams website](#).

Subway

The only subway system in Scotland is in Glasgow and is operated by the Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT).

- [Describe Online website](#) provides a useful description of each of the stations, written with the disabled user in mind.

Ferries

- The accessibility of marine vessels is guided by EU regulations. The Department for Transport have devised a useful [guidance document](#) outlining the disabled passengers' rights resulting from the guidance.
- Caledonian MacBrayne Ferries (CalMac) and North Link Ferries are the major operators of ferry services in Scotland. North Link has a [dedicated webpage](#) describing the company's accessibility policy and detailing how to use the on-board facilities provided for disabled passengers. P&O ferries operating services to and from Northern Ireland also have a [webpage](#) focusing on accessibility.

Planes

- The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) produced a [guide](#) containing tips for disabled passengers who fly.

For information on dedicated facilities for those with different accessibility requirements available at airports please see: [Edinburgh Airport](#) or [Glasgow Airport](#)

Support Services

Travel cards and ticketing

There is a range of travel cards available to disabled passengers. These are mostly aimed at passengers with mobility assistance needs

- [Thistle Assistance Cards](#) are designed to indicate to staff that the holder might need extra help and specifies the type of disability or impairment the holder may have. This scheme operates in following regions:
 - [Clackmannanshire](#)
 - [Dumfries and Galloway](#)
 - [Perth & Kinross](#)
 - [South East of Scotland](#)
 - [Tayside and Central Scotland](#)

Thistle Assistance Cards have also been adopted in other areas of the country, please check with your local council for details.

Individual transport providers operating Scotland wide have their own card schemes:

- First Group uses the [Better Journey Card](#) as well as the [Safe Journey Card](#).
- ScotRail has a [Passenger Assistance Card](#) with useful contact details and space for users to write their questions directed at staff.

Fare concessions and assistance

- The Scotland-wide Concessionary Travel Scheme for those above 60 and with certain disabilities allows eligible passengers free travel on most bus services in the country. The scheme is described on the Transport Scotland [website](#) that also includes information on applying. Local authorities provide a range of concessions on transport but where they exist they can differ widely in scope and provision. Some have 'Taxicard' schemes providing taxi fare reductions. Transport operators themselves also offer concessionary fares and discounts, for example on the railways and ferries.
- Nationwide, a [railcard scheme](#) for disabled passengers is operated by National Rail. The card entitles eligible users to a 30% discount on rail travel.
- ScotRail operates a [Passenger Assist](#) service with a helpline on 0800 912 2901 and a Text Relay service for the hard of hearing. Assistance must be booked at least 4 hours in advance. UK-wide, National Rail provides information on [assistance](#) available to disabled passengers.
- The Taxi Card scheme enables people with severe mobility difficulties who cannot use public transport, and have no other means of travel, to be able to use taxis at a reduced fare. A Taxi Card scheme does not operate in all areas

of Scotland – for example it is not offered in the Strathclyde area as the MyBus service is extensive there. In some areas it is not possible to have both a National Entitlement Card (free bus pass) and a Taxi Card. Check your local authority website or ask your local social work department if there is a Taxi Card service for disabled people in your area.

- For further guidance on taxi policy please see [here](#)

Information

There are many other general sources of information on accessible travel available in addition to this resource. Below we list some of the most useful ones:

- Transport Scotland has a good range of information on accessible travel on its [website](#).
- The Scottish Accessible Transport Alliance (SATA) has [this publication](#) and a number of others on its website.
- Transport operators have a range of information on their websites which can be accessed direct or via Traveline Scotland. Traveline provides information on accessibility of stops and vehicles normally used on route in addition to up-to-date schedule information.
- Local authorities provide information about their transport and travel services for people with disabilities.
- The [Scottish Accessible Information Forum](#) (SAIF) deals with information people need when planning, booking and making a journey.
- The free [Rough Guide to Accessible Britain](#) is a guidebook to Britain written with disabled people in mind. It covers information on travel, accommodation and local attractions and describes how accessible these are.

Training

Disability awareness and equality training for transport staff at all levels is now seen as a key factor in the development of accessible services.

- The Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS) published a set of [minimum standards](#) for staff assisting disabled people. These cover attitudes and communication, providing physical assistance as well as handling mobility aids.
- Online disability awareness [training](#) is available from Equo.
- GoSkills, sets [standards](#) for staff training in the bus and coach industry.

- The Community Transport Association (CTA) has developed [MIDAS](#), the nationally accepted training and assessment scheme for all types of minibus drivers, as well as [PATS](#), a passenger assistant training scheme.
- The National Register of Access Consultants (NRAC) is a resource for those seeking advice on how to develop inclusive environments. As well as the register of accredited access auditors and consultants, it has [information on training courses](#).

Co-ordination: representative bodies

Some of the main ones are:

Association of Transport Coordinating Officers (ATCO) (www.atco.org.uk) – organisation of local authority staff with key roles for transport policy development

Community Transport Association (CTA) (www.cta.org) - represents local community transport organisations

Confederation of Passenger transport (CPT) (www.cpt-uk.org) is the trade association representing the bus, coach and light rail industries.

Confederation of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA) (www.cosla.gov.uk) is the representative voice of Scottish local government and the employers' association for Scottish Councils.

Lothian Community Transport Services (www.lcts.org.uk) provides a range of services for community transport organisations, including information and training, in Edinburgh, Midlothian, West Lothian and beyond.

Scottish Accessible Transport Alliance (SATA) is a disability user-led organisation with some 80 corporate and individual members (www.scottishaccessibletransport.org.uk)

Scottish Regional Transport Partnerships:

Highlands and Islands	(HiTrans www.hitrans.org.uk)
North East of Scotland	(Nestrans www.nestrans.org.uk)
Shetland	(Zettrans – www.zettrans.org.uk)
South East of Scotland	(SEStran – www.sestran.gov.uk)
South West of Scotland	(Swestrans – www.swestrans.org.uk)
Strathclyde Partnership for Transport	(SPT - www.spt.co.uk)
Tayside and Central Scotland	(Tactran – www.tactran.org.uk)

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

General resources related to accessibility:

A comprehensive overview of websites related to accessibility can be found in the Place to Place [report](#) published by SATA.