

Item:
15



Report to Partnership Meeting 8th November 2024

PARTNERSHIP

Accessible Travel Framework – Delivery Plan 2024-2026

Purpose of Report

To provide Members with a summary of the recently published Accessible Travel Framework Delivery Plan covering the period from 2024 to 2026.

Background

Transport Scotland originally produced the Accessible Travel Framework in 2016 as a 10-year plan. The Framework is supported by a 2 yearly delivery plan that sets out the actions being taken to improve the door to door journeys for disabled people and many others who might, at any time, have difficulty when travelling in and around Scotland. The 2024 – 2026 Delivery Plan was published on 4th October 2024 and can be accessed [here](#).

Accessible Travel Framework Priorities 2024-2026

This final Delivery Plan, and the priorities within it, have been agreed in co-production with the National Transport Accessibility Steering Group (which HITRANS Partnership Director attend on behalf of the RTPs) the Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS), and by policy officials from across Transport Scotland and Scottish Government.

The priorities have a number of activities listed. Many activities are longer term or ongoing and will require monitoring to understand whether progress or continual improvement is being delivered. Other activities are more focussed and may be achieved within a shorter timescale. This activity list will be a “live” list and will be subject to updating and change if new activities arise which are agreed by the steering group.

Currently identified measures of success are listed for each workstream. Work is also underway with workstream five: evidence base and measuring progress to further identify sources of evidence. When these are identified they will be incorporated into the measures of success for each workstream.

The Workstreams are summarised below:

- Workstream 1: Passenger Experience - This workstream seeks to improve the pre-boarding and on-board experience for disabled passengers across all modes. Improving the passenger experience requires supporting the needs of individuals, recognising these needs can often be intersecting, and includes hidden disabilities. This is a priority as improving the passenger experience should give confidence and enable disabled people to make more journeys and have more choice. This workstream is split into five sub-workstreams: bus, rail, ferry, aviation, and taxi.

- Workstream 2: Journey Planning, Ticketing and Wayfinding - This workstream aims to ensure that digital and non-digital information resources, are fit for purpose so that disabled travellers can make more journeys.
This is a priority as ensuring travel information is accessible and fit for purpose should enable more disabled people to make more successful journeys.
- Workstream 3: Clear Pathways - This workstream seeks to work towards making paths and pavements clear and accessible for all. It is a priority pathways are usable for all to enable more disabled people to make more successful and safer door to door journeys, and to encourage active travel, and for enabling connections between travel modes.
- Workstream 4: Blue Badge - This workstream seeks to ensure there is continuous improvement in the delivery of the Blue Badge policy. The scheme is designed to help disabled people who have severe mobility problems lead independent lives and improve the safety of disabled people who are at risk in traffic. Transport Scotland is responsible for the national policy and legislation that governs the Blue Badge scheme. However, the day-to-day administration and enforcement is the responsibility of individual local authorities. In 2022, Transport Scotland completed an extensive review and updated local authority guidance to promote consistency in the delivery of the scheme. This included successfully streamlining the processes for those applying under the 'not for reassessment' heading and the redesign of all paper application forms.
- Workstream 5: Evidence Base and Measuring Progress - This workstream seeks to ensure that baseline data is gathered and understood, and that effective monitoring is in place. Improved data collection will mean it is easier to track progress and improve understanding of travel experience of disabled people. This workstream cuts across and interacts with many of the other workstreams as robust data is essential to understand what progress is being made with the ultimate aim of "reducing the mobility gap."
- Workstream 6: Transport to Health and Social Care - This workstream seeks to ensure there is support for disabled people to travel safely to appointments. There is ongoing work related to this across Transport Scotland and Scottish Government, which is set out in the Transport to Health Delivery Plan. The Accessible Travel team will keep a watching brief on this work and update the National Transport Accessibility Steering Group on progress made. Activity under this workstream includes a specific commitment to continue to support and engage with Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) on policies related to transport to health and to ensure these are reflected in their regional transport strategies. HITRANS work on a Health and Transport Action Plan falls within this and gives a key focal point to this in the Highlands and Islands.
- Workstream 7: A successor to the Accessible Travel Framework - The Accessible Travel Framework was set up to span 10 years, so will end towards the end of 2026. While progress has been made and will continue to be made over the next two years it is important to also need to look beyond the end of the Framework in 2026.

RISK REGISTER

RTS Delivery

Impact – Positive

Comment – The Framework includes a commitment to work with RTPs and Local Authorities on delivering key priorities.

Policy

Impact - Positive

Financial

Impact – Positive

Comment – A number of commitments offer opportunity to build better and more accessible transport services in the Highlands and Islands.

Equality

Impact – Positive

Comment – With fairness and just transition at the heart of PfG this will have a positive The Framework is designed to support removing barriers to improve the door to door journeys for disabled people and many others.

Recommendation

1. Members and Advisors are asked to note the report.

Report by: Ranald Robertson
Designation: Partnership Director
Date: 30th October 2024