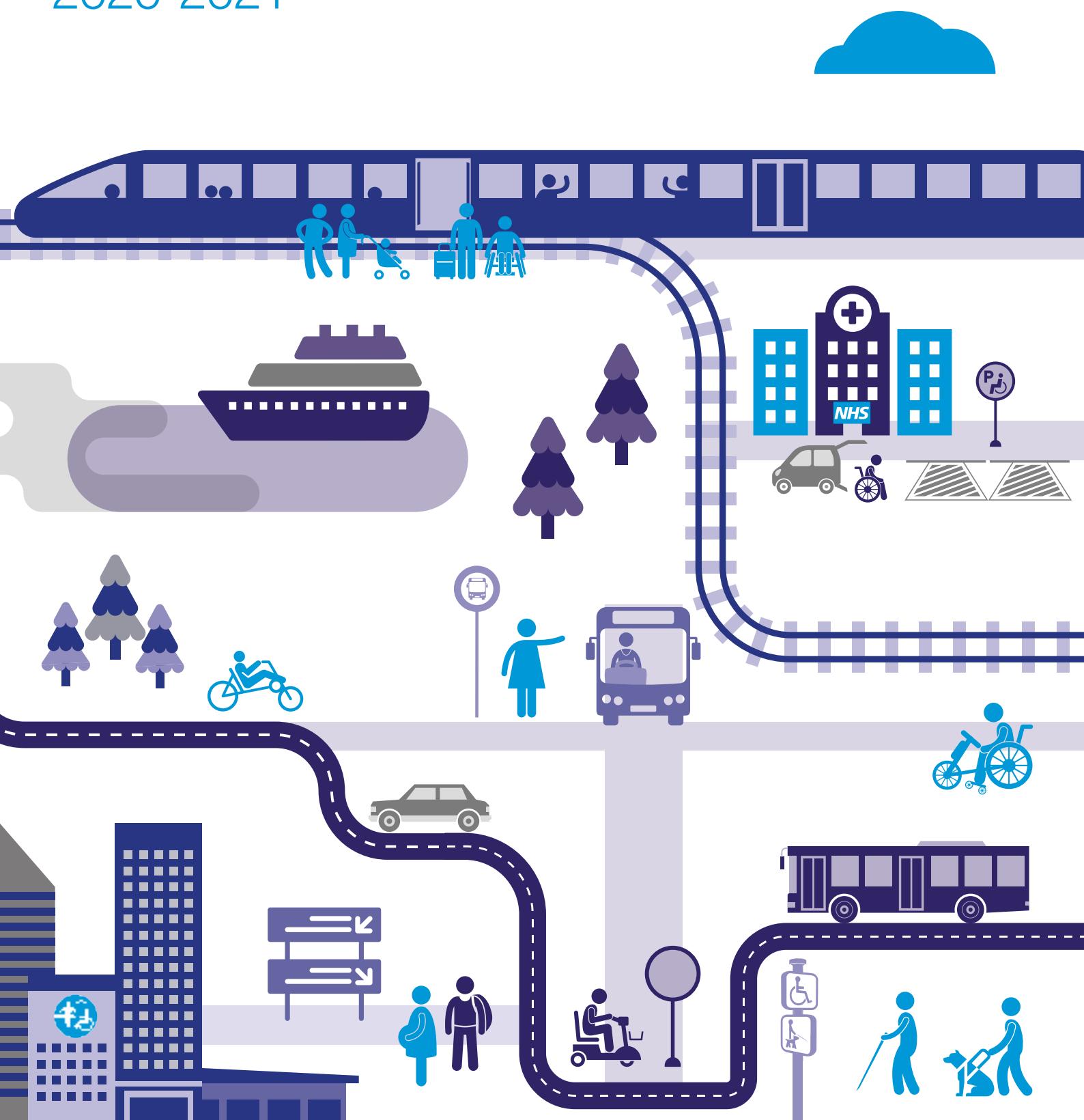
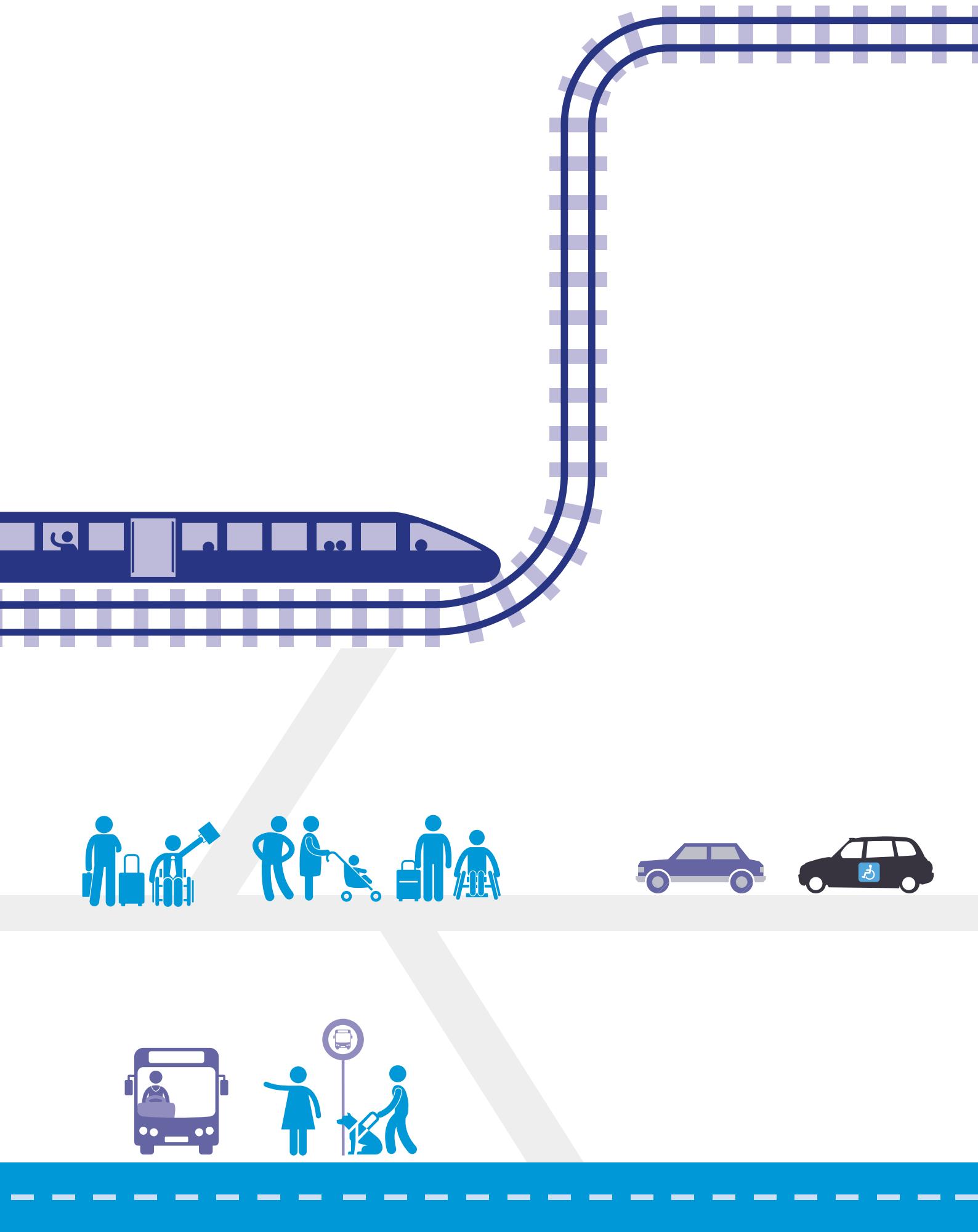
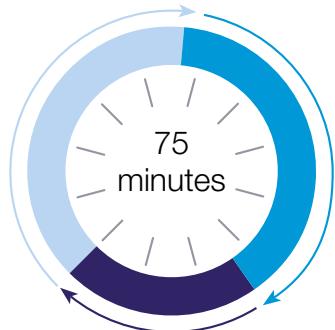


Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland Annual Report 2020-2021





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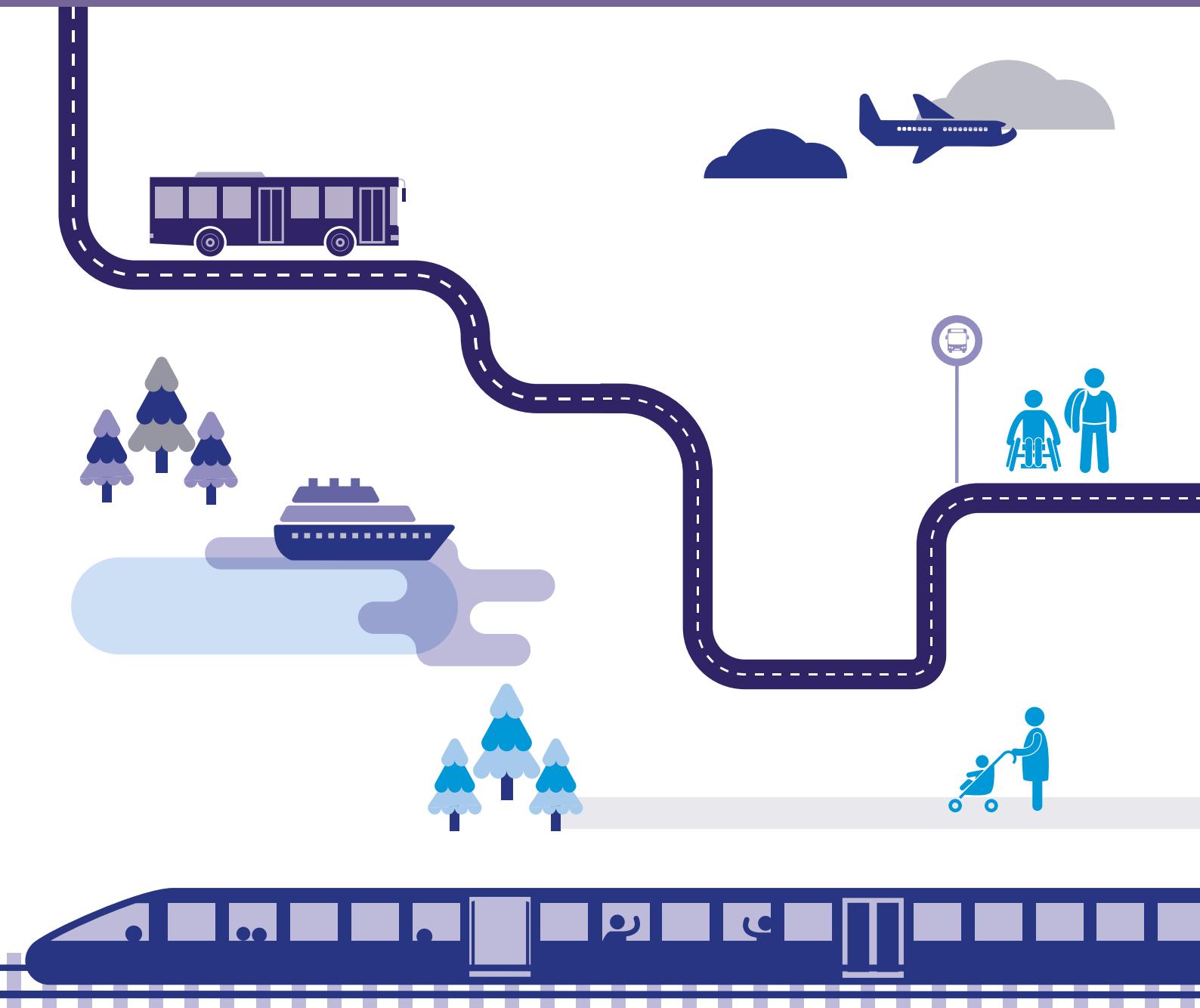
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1

Convener's Update



Convener's Update

This is the fourth annual report I have written as Convener of the Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS) and this takes me into my second term. Working with my MACS team this year, we have taken time to develop and produce our Strategic Plan for 2021-2024, which will cover the full second term of my appointment. Each year, as part of our planning cycle, we will revisit this as well as other areas of our work and the feedback we receive from our external engagements, to develop our annual Work Plan. Our Strategic Plan and Work Plan has been agreed with the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity, prior to parliamentary recess.

We left you at the end of last year confirming that this year we would prioritise our focus on progressing previous “sticking points” and on the first and last mile of journeys and inter-modal connections.

As we experienced the impact and disruption of Covid-19 and the public health crisis, work in these areas was never so critical to assist with physical distancing, ensuring disabled people and older people could reconnect after lockdown and stay connected, eventually with the confidence to return to public transport as it becomes safe to do so.

We also needed to ensure pop-up infrastructures, re-purposed roads and pavements (to support physical distancing, increase active travel and assist with sustainable transport choices to reduce emissions) and Transport Transition Plans, developed by the Scottish Government and Transport Scotland, were accessible and inclusive to all.

In our work in these areas we were keen to ensure that there was an understanding that some of these options would not work for many disabled people and older people and as such our drive remained reducing inequalities and providing a transport system (and supporting infrastructure) that was “Available, Accessible and Affordable” to all (MACS triple A check).



Our focus being to prevent any further exclusion of disabled people who have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, to reduce the existing inequality gap and to advocate that new infrastructures and travel options need to be accessible and inclusive to all.

I could never have foreseen the events that have unfolded over this reporting year in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic, which has affected each and every one of us, in one way or another.

In this report I will give you my personal update and my Workstream Leaders will give their updates. I will also update you on our Development and Scoping Days and our recent series of ministerial engagement meetings (including the key questions raised at these sessions). This report will also provide an update on our “sticking points” – the areas we have previously identified as hard to move, or progress, regardless of our advice, engagements and impetus.

But this year, I will also dedicate time to the tireless work of the Committee in its response to Covid-19 where we undertook our own secretarial role for several months and developed ways of working to stay connected and get doors opened to ensure the voices of disabled people were heard at the tables, especially where plans and strategies were being developed in response to, and for the recovery from, the pandemic.

I am grateful to my MACS Team for stepping up without question and selflessly giving additional commitment in pursuit of our objectives.

During the period from lockdown (23 March 2020) through to the end of July 2020, and as a result of the withdrawal of the Sponsor Team and Secretariat support, as Convener and leader, I quickly established and coordinated a series of shorter and more frequent internal meetings to assist with team welfare and ensure continued communications. This allowed the Committee to progress its work independently. It is recognised that these arrangements meant Committee members working more flexibly and also significantly added to the workload of the Planning and Strategy Workstream in particular.

I would like to record my thanks for this level of contribution, dedication and commitment and for the many unpaid hours my team committed to responding to numerous requests, with most at extremely short notice, to ensure the voices of disabled people and older people were heard.



Finally, I will conclude on some good news for the Committee. We have recently appointed six new MACS members. The appointment of these new members provides us with further experience and knowledge, to complement that within the team, and I am sure will also generate fresh and new thoughts, new ideas and bring some new energy and innovation into the Committee. Our new members have a wide and varied background and I will give more detail later in my report.

I would also like to thank Scottish Ministers, our Secretariat and Sponsor Team, and our partners and stakeholders, for working with, and supporting us as we all found our way through this challenging year, raising awareness and highlighting the challenges many disabled people and older people were encountering, whilst adapting to our new ways of living and working.

Transport is a key enabler and never more so this year, as we all sought to undertake our essential and critical journeys during stressful times and under a new set of rules and regulations. I know, like me, many people have as yet not attempted to use the transport system, whether that was due to adhering to public health messaging, adapting to working from home or if you were shielding, but for those who did, we worked hard to ensure that you had the right support and information you required to make your journey and travel safely.

I would especially like to thank some of the organisations we have worked more closely with this year, to ensure we heard the voices of disabled people and older people and that these voices were current and related to grassroots issues. So thank you to Disability Equality Scotland for allowing us to test our thinking via your members' polls and webinars and to Sustrans Scotland and The Alliance for the discussion on 20-minute neighbourhoods. We look forward to continuing to work with you this year.

We were also pleased to see, and take part in, Transport Scotland's response to the pandemic through the introduction of the:

- Transport Transition Plan National Advisory Group, and
- Transport Equalities Network.

There are many people to thank here but in particular we would like to thank the Transport Policy and Integration Team and the Strategy Team in Transport Scotland for reaching out to MACS early in the transport planning process and for being so receptive to the issues we raised and our many asks.

MACS played its part in the above groups and I will provide more detail on our roles and responsibilities within these forums in the Response to Covid-19 Section below.

I will also provide some details of MACS contribution to the National Transport Strategy (NTS2) via the Delivery Board chaired by the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity.

As in last year's Convener's Introduction I would like to take the time to share my personal highlights (yes, there were some) and the pieces of work that I am proud of over the past year. These are outwith my team's performance which I am most proud of. We couldn't have achieved my top four without a team approach.

1. In this year's Programme for Government (PfG) we saw a greater focus on equality and inclusion, which we have been pushing for, and after our "dog with a bone" approach we also saw "wheeling" not only being introduced into PfG and the NTS2 but taking pride of place at the top of the Transport Hierarchy where it belongs.

This sends out a strong message of our Government's intent and we hope to see actions follow these strategies to reduce the mobility gap.

Transport Hierarchy: Prioritising Sustainable Transport

Descriptor – The graphic Image 1 shows the transport hierarchy as an inverted pyramid with the most sustainable transport modes at the top five tiers.

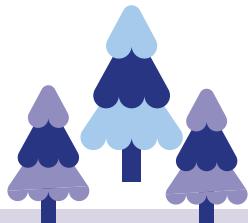
Top – walking and wheeling

Next level – cycling

Dropping down to – public transport

Next level down – taxis and shared cars

Bottom of the hierarchy – private cars



Prioritising Sustainable Transport

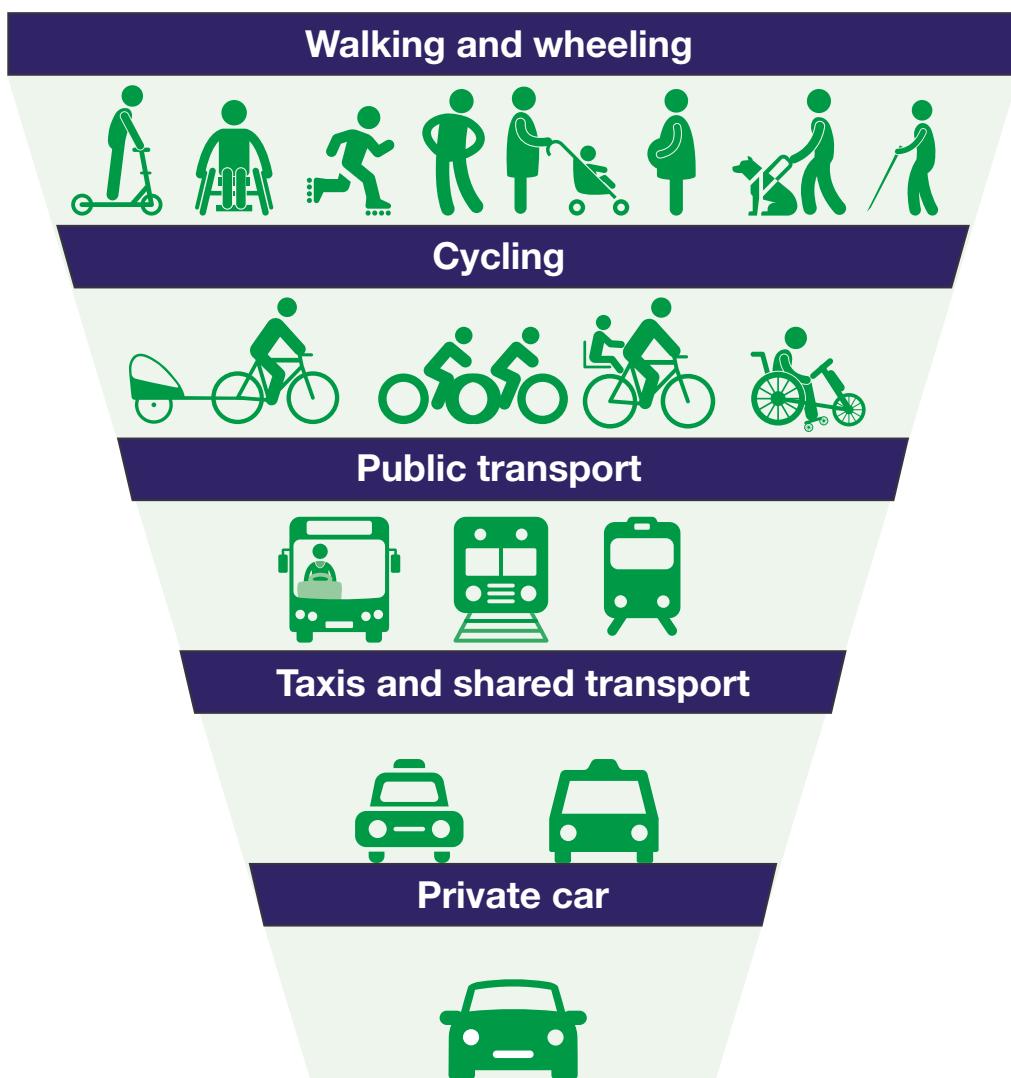
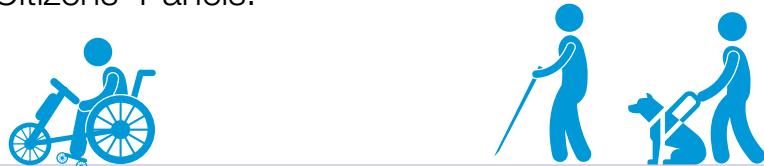


Image 1 - Sustainable Transport Hierarchy

2. Through our engagements and constant messaging we are hearing, and seeing more departments, policy teams and organisations conducting Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) and more recently starting to involve disabled people or their representatives early in this process. We know we still have work to do here and this remains one of our five high level objectives that will span more than one year.
3. I have been particularly pleased to also see and hear others refer to, and use, MACS Triple A check for Transport. That is, that it is “Available, Accessible and Affordable”. This ties in well with the work of the NTS2 Delivery Board and the Transport Equalities Network and will be a good focus for the emerging Transport Citizens’ Panels.



4. We also saw progress on our previous work on Transport to Health and Social Care. The need to address this was recognised in the “Reduces Inequality” pillar of NTS2. Our Recommendation One from our roundtable events was also accepted as core to the transport elements of the Review of Adult Social Care.

[Adult social care: independent review - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

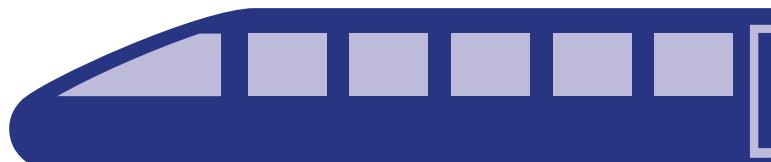
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/independent-review-adult-social-care-scotland-easy-read/>

Recommendation One:

Transport should be built in as an integral part of the care pathway. There needs to be better joined-up care planning and working with NHS, Local Authorities and the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS), with the Community Transport Association (CTA) recognised as key partners in the planning and care pathway.

We are strengthening our relationship with Scottish Government (SG) Health officials to pick this work back up as the NHS in Scotland remobilises from the Covid-19 pandemic. We are also asking that the SG engage to “lock in” good practice initiatives that saw organisations work across boundaries that previously prevented transport planning to medical appointments from being designed around the patients’ needs. More recently Transport Scotland’s Accessible Travel Policy Team have also agreed to make this area a focus for their 2021-2022 Delivery Plan, working with their SG colleagues in Health and MACS to progress much needed improvements.

This year involved a swift and rapid transition for the Committee to move to virtual meetings, and this has not been without its challenges, not least the loss of the human interaction we all thrive on. Moving to this format, although presenting challenges, also provided opportunities, opportunities for us to really get to know and understand each other’s needs, skill set, passions and challenges.



We are all now fully aware of our new buzz words – “you’re on mute”, “is my camera on – can you see me?”, and my personal favourite, “you can log off now”. We even managed a MACS Zoom Christmas Party, fantastically hosted by one of our Leads (Marsali Craig). Surprising, given that Marsali regularly refers to herself as the least “tech-savvy” member of the team. I think we had the wool pulled over our eyes there!

With our new technology, whether it’s adapting to using Skype, Zoom or MS Teams, we are all now proficient and confident in the use of these tools. They have offered some respite for members having to manage care plans and caring and for those having to make daily commutes. Whatever the “new normal” holds I hope some of our new ways of working can continue in some capacity.

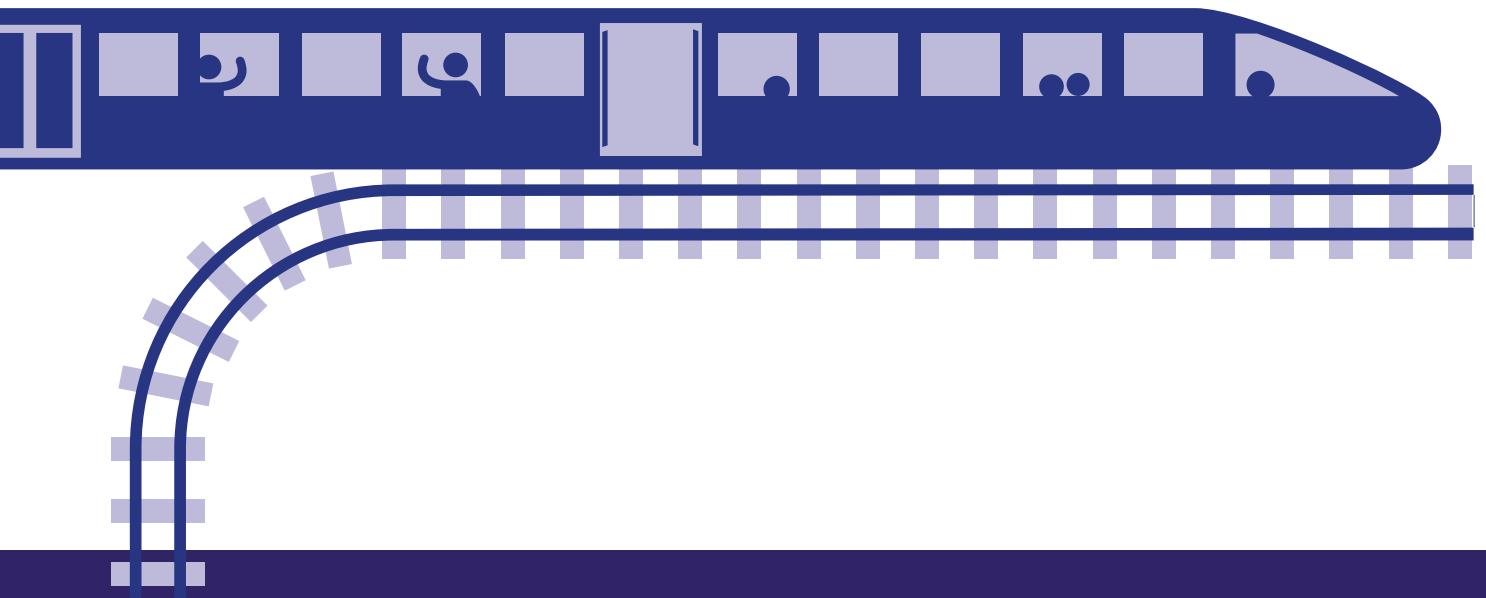
I am not sure what the challenges for the year ahead holds, but I am sure of one thing: the Committee that I lead stands ready to embrace it, contribute to it and do our best to ensure that accessible travel improves for all.

I thank you all.

Linda Bamford

National Convener

Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS)



2

Responding to Covid-19



Responding to Covid-19

Having developed a cross-portfolio role across SG, which has afforded MACS the opportunity to influence connecting policies, we have had a direct role in shaping Transport Scotland's response to Covid-19 through our facilitation and membership of key decision making forums such as the NTS2 Delivery Board.

We have also been instrumental in producing and contributing to public guidance, including:

- Transport Transition Plans - guidance to transport operators on assisting disabled passengers; <https://www.transport.gov.scot/coronavirus-covid-19/transport-transition-plan/>
- Temporary Street measures during the Coronavirus Crisis; <https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/48310/temporary-street-measures-during-coronavirus-crisis-october-2020.pdf>
- Coronavirus (Covid-19) guidance on safer public spaces – urban centres and green spaces; <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/safer-public-places-urban-centres-and-green-spaces-covid-19>

We also supported, and were supported by Third Sector organisations which represent the interests of disabled people. These organisations worked incredibly hard in difficult circumstances to raise awareness of under-appreciated issues and we used these, and our unique insights, to produce guidance for transport operators and service providers. We have also worked tirelessly to promote and share this material across our social media platforms and with our networks and stakeholders.

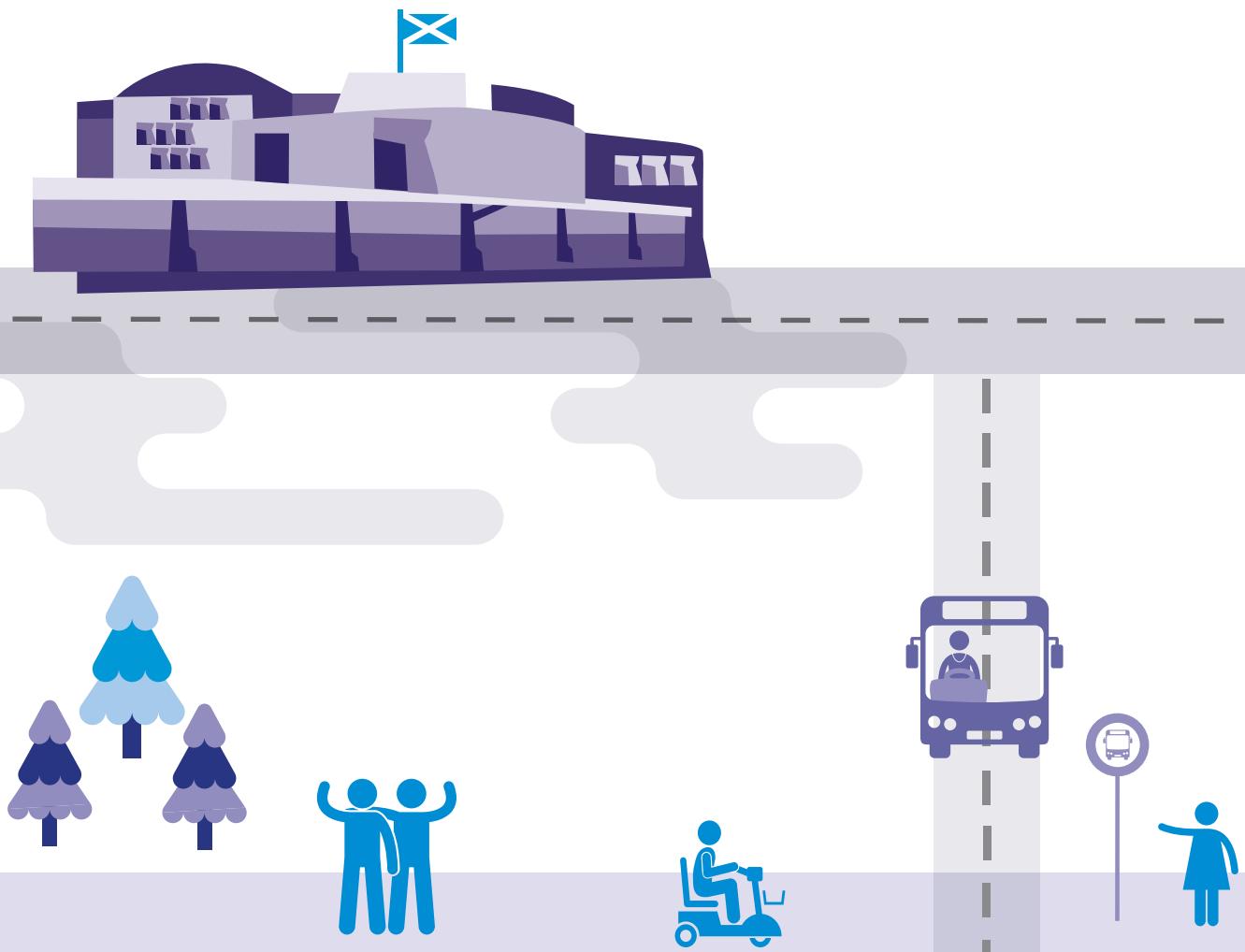
At strategic level MACS were invited by Transport Scotland senior officials to sit on, and feed into, the following forums:

- Transport Transition Plan National Advisory Group, which was established to align national, regional and local activities;
- Transport Transition Plan Equalities Network, which was set up to support the Impact Assessments of public transport Covid-19 measures and brings together a wide range of experts and stakeholders from Scotland's equality community, including the Poverty and Inequality Commission, Equality and Human Rights Commission, Young Scot, Engender and Disability Equality Scotland.

MACS looks forward to continuing our engagement at a strategic level and are keen to feed into the Future of Transport Forum, which will act as an overarching engagement platform bringing together stakeholders to facilitate collective considerations and discussions on the future of the transport system in Scotland.

3

Business As Usual – Leads Update



Business As Usual – Leads Update

During this year, and as part of our succession planning, we sought expressions of interest from existing Committee members for Workstream Leads positions. These positions come with increased accountability as well as an increased time commitment. We had one unplanned and immediate vacancy and took the opportunity to recruit for this, and to plan for the retirement of three of our current Workstream Leads at the end of September 2021, as they complete their second term and eight years with MACS. Mighty big shoes to fill.

This succession planning activity was a great success and for those working more closely with us, you will see some of the personnel changes this year.

Leads Update

Much of MACS work is conducted through Workstreams. Leadership for each area is provided by the Workstream Leads.

Planning and Strategy

David Hunter is the Co-Lead of the Planning and Strategy Workstream, sharing responsibility with myself as Convener. The team also includes the other Workstream Leads ensuring connection across all areas of the Committee's work and preventing silo working. This year's main achievements include:

- **Responding to Covid-19** – this Workstream has been heavily involved in the Transport Transition Plan National Advisory Group (TTP NAG) and the Transport Equalities Network (TEN). These forums were set up to move through the stages of the route map out of lockdown.

MACS had significant input into the EqIA underpinning the TTPs at all stages. In progressing the EqIAs, MACS continued to take a collaborative approach, working with key stakeholders, to develop a robust evidence base assessment of the proposed policy actions, to inform the TTP decision making process and publication. It has become apparent that while the evidence currently available on the impacts of the pandemic on disabled people and transport inequalities is limited, the pandemic has had a particularly negative impact on disabled people and their mobility. At the early stages of the pandemic MACS prepared guidance to transport operators on the needs and requirements of disabled people.

This work was undertaken at pace with short turn-around but has since been shared across the four nations and other platforms. MACS also contributed to a major study on the impact of the pandemic on transport and health inequalities, produced by Public Health Scotland.

<https://www.publichealthscotland.scot/media/2850/transport-use-health-and-health-inequalities-oct2020-english.pdf>

- **NTS2 Delivery Board** – As well as David contributing to the NTS Delivery Board, members of the Planning and Strategy Workstream continued to support the NTS2 Delivery Team in relation to the NTS2 Delivery Plan and the Working with Partners Document and through membership of the NTS2 Delivery Board sub groups. MACS also liaised closely with Transport Scotland on the new Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 (STPR2), which will guide major investments in transport for years to come, to ensure that accessibility is a key consideration throughout.

<https://www.transport.gov.scot/our-approach/strategy/strategic-transport-projects-review-2/>

- **TS Analytical Team** – David and the Convener have had several meetings with the team. These meetings were in an attempt to develop a database and data set that can measure the travel patterns of disabled people, to assist with measuring the “reduces inequalities” elements of the NTS2. In discussion with the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity, there was a welcoming of the concept of “reducing the mobility gap” and it is hoped that collecting the right information will help to identify and measure this. These meetings will continue.
- **Motability** – MACS concerns on various aspects of Motability remain and were again raised in a letter to the Cabinet Secretary for Social Security and Older People. In the main, this was in relation to the value for money (VFM) element of the scheme and MACS proposed that an annual dividend from the profits generated should be returned to customers each year. A copy of the letter was also copied to other Ministers, to the Chairs of Westminster Select Committees (who have an interest in and have been scrutinising the Scheme) and to the Accessible Vehicle and Equipment Scheme (AVES) lead within the Scottish Government. (AVES is the new Scheme which accredits “Motability-type” services in Scotland. Motability is currently the sole accredited delivery partner.) Thereafter MACS were given an update on how the AVES was developing and the key points are below.
 - The roll-out of **Child Disability Payment** will commence from 26 July 2021 in three local authorities (Perth and Kinross Council, Dundee City Council and Western Isles Council), with the new replacement for Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and Adult Disability Payment due in Spring 2022.
 - Spring 2022 will also be around the time when a review of accreditation for **AVES** will be undertaken. It is hoped that there will be more providers to accredit so that Motability is no longer the sole provider and more flexibility and customer interaction can be achieved. MACS will be involved in this process, which is very much welcomed.
 - MACS suggested that bicycles should also be looked at as a mobility aid.
 - David presented some of MACS findings, concerns and asks on Motability to the Poverty and Inequality Commission’s Board of Commissioners who agreed that there was a need for a review of the vfm aspects of the Scheme.

MACS will continue to raise these issues in arenas such as the NTS2 Delivery Board, and also continue engagement with the Motability charity regarding potential support for access to EV charging and possibly support for community transport.

- **Widening Concessionary Travel** to reduce inequalities and make travel more affordable – David and the Convener met with a sub group of the NTS Delivery Board to discuss the exclusion of some disabled people from concessionary travel schemes. These exclusions include individuals who qualify for concessionary travel, but have no options due to a lack of bus services, or where their needs require a more bespoke door-to-door journey.

Options discussed included exploring a more consistent taxi card scheme across the 32 Local Authority areas and/or looking at using concessionary travel on community transport, where there are no registered bus services. Rail, ferry and tram concessions also vary widely from one place to the next. These result in a widening inequality which needs to be addressed.

Agreement was reached that the Accessible Travel Policy team would undertake some exploratory work in the summer to better understand where the CTA and other community transport groups are plugging the gaps. This is an area MACS will continue to push in attempt to address this area and to reduce inequalities.

- **Recruitment, Selection and Succession Planning** – The Planning and Strategy Workstream have also been heavily involved in the MACS recruitment and selections process, successfully recruiting six new members. A brief introduction to the new members is given in Section 7 (Meet our Committee).
- **Sharing Knowledge and Research** – The Planning and Strategy, Roads, Infrastructure and Active Travel Workstreams have fed into different strands of work relating to inclusive design and best practice in creating inclusive spaces and accessible infrastructure; for example, Spaces for People – (SfP). The workstream also linked into the Transport Research Laboratory and Department for Transport (DfT) work and thinking on the review of good practice guides such as Inclusive Mobility and Cycling by Design.

The Planning and Strategy Workstream frequently review the activity of the Committee, share learning and agree areas of focus that will make the biggest difference to the travel needs of disabled people and older people. These meetings form part of the Committee's annual planning cycle and link to the production of the Work Plans.

Ferries and Aviation

Hilary Stubbs is MACS Vice Convener and leads the Ferries and Aviation Workstream. She is supported by Linda Bamford and Naghat Ahmed.

Below are some of this year's key achievements, although it should be noted that due to Covid-19 and travelling restrictions across Scotland, demand and capacity levels on ferries have been continually monitored. Transport Scotland officials have been engaging with ferry operators throughout to ensure that services have been maintained at an appropriate level. This has involved a balanced approach to ensure that lifeline connectivity relied upon by communities and island economies is maintained.

In this reporting year Hilary has joined the Steering Group looking at the long-term vessel and infrastructure requirements of the Gourock-to-Dunoon passenger ferry service. The Group included representatives from Caledonian Maritime Assets Limited (CMAL), CalMAC Ferries Ltd and Argyll and Bute Council. Hilary also responded to the Consultation on Policy Proposal for Section 9 Review of Decisions – Islands (Scotland) Act.

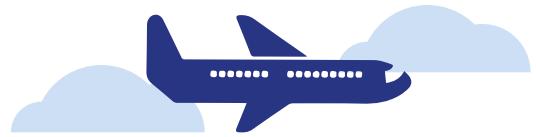
The [Islands \(Scotland\) Act 2018](#) requires Scottish Ministers to establish, by regulations, provision about review of decisions of relevant authorities relating to island communities impact assessments under section 8(1) of the Act. A copy of MACS response is available on our website and the link is available within **Appendix One**.

Through MACS involvement in the Transport Transition Plan National Advisory Group and the Transport Equalities Network, Hilary was asked to input to the draft Islands Communities Impact Assessment (ICIA). MACS knowledge was sought in relation to the dependence of island communities on ferry services.

Two of the main issues fed in to be addressed were:

1. The joining up of onward transport i.e. buses and trains and the introduction of amended timetables, which can pose barriers to disabled people and requires to be emphasised in the assessment;
2. The carriage of dogs on ferries. Those kept in cars do not require being booked; however, those which are to be taken on deck or inside the passenger area require pre-booking however, assistance/support dogs are exempt. MACS recommendation was to advocate that assistance/support dogs should be given priority/exemption on all ferries and to make this clear in messaging.





Through a meeting with Transport Scotland's Ferries Team MACS are pleased to report that the design specifications for both the harbour development at Ardrossan and the new ferries (which are currently being built) have included many of MACS "asks" for accessible and inclusive travel. In particular the ferries will have a Changing Place toilet facility, wider corridors, electric doors, improved staircases with double handrails, coloured stair nosing and accessible catering facilities. The MACS team can be proud of the work they have done to encourage these inclusive developments.

Additionally this year the Committee met with the Minister for Energy, Connectivity and the Islands, Paul Wheelhouse MSP, and in a follow-up meeting with Transport Scotland Ferries Team they were asked to comment on the draft National Islands Route Map 2020-2025.

Again this year saw Hilary support the airports in their assessments for the Civil Aviation Authority grading of assistance as well as supporting the Ferries Accessibility Fund Round 6. As with previous rounds MACS (Hilary) has been part of the decision making process and supported the four successful applications, which will bring benefits to communities throughout Scotland.

Initial work has also started on the Island Connectivity Plan and Hilary found herself working with the other devolved nations on post Brexit regulations for assistance in relation to cross border travel.

It is worth mentioning that future tenders for publicly-funded ferry services must include a system that improves the level of accessibility information; below are a few examples of this on both CalMac and Serco Northlink Ferries.

- The travelling public can view information on the help available to passengers by visiting the CalMac website and from the homepage follow the links to "Travelling with Us", "Help for Passengers", and "Passenger Assistance", which will take them to the following webpage:

<https://www.calmac.co.uk/travelling-with-calmac/help-for-passengers/passenger-assistance>

- Due to the varied nature of the CalMac network the facilities at ports vary from unmanned slipways to ports with a small port office or a large ferry terminal. Passengers can check in advance the facilities that are available at each port by visiting this webpage:

<https://www.calmac.co.uk/destinations/ports>

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- The accessibility information system can be viewed on the Serco NorthLink Ferries (SNF) [website](#) and will evolve to include standardised symbols developed in consultation with the MACS and the Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC). Their accessibility policy with more details can be found here:

<https://www.northlinkferries.co.uk/legal/accessibility-policy/>

- In addition to the accessible information system, Serco NorthLink are working on a project to develop a braille information system covering various items such as a general guide to areas on board, facilities and emergency procedures.
- British Sign Language users can contact SNF via an interpreter provided by Sign Solutions. This system allows customers to video call an interpreter who will in turn phone SNF's customer service team. This system also works within their terminals too with all terminals having the capability to video call an interpreter so SNF can best understand customers' requirements. This service can be found here:

www.northlinkferries.co.uk/sign-language-interpreter-service/

Other SNF initiatives to assist passengers include:

- Information on accessible cabins for disabled passengers can be found here;

<https://www.northlinkferries.co.uk/the-journey/accessibility-options/>

- SNF have the “Recite Me” function available on their website, which reads the content of all documents on their website aloud when activated. All documents can be found here;

<https://www.northlinkferries.co.uk/news/publications/>

- Earlier this year, SNF published their accessible travel guide and copies were sent to MACS. This can be accessed via the following link

<https://www.northlinkferries.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/NLF-Inclusive-Travel-Guide.pdf>

- Passengers are also able to take a virtual tour of SNF vessels using this link,

<https://www.northlinkferries.co.uk/the-journey/tour/>

Bus and Community Transport

Audrey Birt picked up the mantle as Workstream Lead from our dear colleague Sheila Fletcher. Audrey is supported by Joanne Devitt.

Below are some of the workstream's key achievements this reporting year. However, it is right to note that bus patronage has been severely impacted due to Covid-19, down by up to 85% in the first national lockdown and by 60% on average since then with the industry receiving continued Government financial assistance to maintain safe capacity.

However, due to capacity constraints as a result of physical distancing, and reduced demand due to restrictions on travel, operators have had to make difficult decisions about where best to deploy their fleets. As a condition of government funding, operators are required to consult and co-operate with local transport authorities and health boards to minimise public transport connectivity disadvantages, including for island and rural communities, and to keep services and demand under review.

The workstream members have been involved in a number of meetings with regard to bus and community transport as well as progressing work on taxi provision.

Audrey agreed to be the MACS representative on the Grampian Health and Transport Action Plan (HTAP) Steering Group. MACS had a particular interest in this work as it linked to their work on Transport to Health and Social Care. The purpose of the action plan is to:

“enable providers of transport, health and social care services to work together in a more coordinated manner in order to improve outcomes and efficiency of service delivery, both in reducing the adverse impacts of transport choices on public health and in improving access to health and social care.”

Audrey will seek to harness and share the innovation used during lockdown and bring this into MACS work with Scottish Government Health colleagues and Transport Scotland's Accessible Travel Framework Annual Delivery Plan in 2021-22. This should also help with the links MACS fostered to Transport to Health and Social Care within the NTS2.

Several meetings have also taken place with the Community Transport Association (CTA) to discuss their role during the recovery phase of the route map out of lockdown as well as discussions around their future plans and where this could assist with elements of the Transport to Health and Social Care recommendations and with the NTS2.

<https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/47020/subgroup-transport-to-health-report.pdf>

More regular meetings have been set up to keep each other better informed of progress.

As a cross-over between two workstreams, Keith Robertson (Roads, Infrastructure and Active Travel Workstream Lead) also undertook work with the Energy Saving Trust who are carrying out some work for Transport Scotland based on barriers and issues that may be faced by Community Transport (CT) in the transition to low emission vehicles. Keith raised the reliance of CT in rural communities and also that funding, to maintain sustainability and stability, was an issue of concern to MACS. Keith also raised the need for CT to be given the same priority as bus, taxi and private hire services and to be recognised as a vital lifeline service.

MACS have been consistent in their ask for the CTA to be seated at the National, Regional and Local Transport planning tables, including when planning transport to medical appointments. During the pandemic it has been recognised that the CTA has stepped up to fill gaps and has been a great assistance in the vaccination programme.

These improvements, and the person-centered service delivery models, cannot be lost!

In relation to taxi and private hire vehicles, MACS undertook a survey in late 2020, to look at the use of taxi cards, which were the only way for many disabled people to source support for use of taxis in their Council area. 32 Local Authority areas were asked to take part with only 13 responding to the survey. MACS found the findings of the survey discouraging, and have concluded that there is a need for some research into how a demand-responsive, integrated taxi, community transport approach could be developed.

Covid-19 has certainly thrown up challenges, which suggests that going back to normal is not an option. Normal didn't work for many disabled people. MACS are continuing to discuss this with both Transport Scotland's Accessible Travel Policy Team and colleagues who have responsibility for Mobility as a Service (MaaS). It is hoped that a good practice guide will be produced in the coming months.

It is also important to take forward any learning from the issues raised by the pandemic. Bus service in rural areas is a significant issue and the future needs to ensure a solution beyond the current situation. Evidence from success and good practice during the pandemic would suggest that Community Transport would have a critically important role to play.



Roads Infrastructure

Keith Robertson leads the Roads, Infrastructure and Active Travel Workstream. Keith is supported by Susan Fulton, David Hunter, Naghat Ahmed, Michael Tornow, Fraser Sutherland and Joanne Devitt.

Below are some of the workstream's key achievements.

- **Urgent correspondence to the Scottish Roadworks Commissioner (SRWC)** – Keith contacted the SRWC early into the first lockdown in 2020, asking if contact could be made to utility companies, Local Authorities and Transport Scotland as a matter of urgency, requesting to either remove or re-site roadworks signs or any other obstructions and barriers created by roadworks temporarily abandoned because of the pandemic from pathways, to make the throughways accessible. The request also asked that they be especially sparing with roadwork signs across Scotland, to ensure pedestrians have enough space for physical distancing. MACS suggestions being that road signs, which might usually be on footways could be on the carriageway, given the reduced level of traffic and our drive to remove pavement clutter.

MACS also note that the Road Works Commissioner has changed. The new commissioner is Kevin Hamilton who introduced himself at a recent MACS meeting and hopefully the fruitful relationship between MACS and the SRWC will continue.

- **Inclusive Mobility and Guidance on the Use of Tactile Paving Surfaces** – Keith has continued to be a member of the Steering Group to progress this work. As well as updating the Committee accordingly, he has engaged with DfT on the re-write of the aforementioned documents. A consultant has been appointed by them to progress this work, working alongside the Steering Group. A number of workshops have been held throughout the year involving a pan-disability representatives. It is hoped that this work will be concluded by the middle of 2021.
- **Roads for All Forum** – This forum has continued throughout the pandemic virtually and has facilitated discussions on temporary streetscapes, cycling by design, inclusive street design and other general issues raised by disabled people. Particular focus from MACS, although not within the jurisdiction of the Roads for All Forum, was in relation to the issue of widening of pedestrian space to accommodate physical distancing, "Spaces for People", and the lack of access for disabled people in and around these temporary works. A copy of "Temporary Street Works" guide produced by MACS was sent to the Society of Chief Officers of Transportation in Scotland (SCOTS), Sustrans Scotland and Transport Scotland.



- **E-Scooters** – The opportunity was also taken to raise concerns over the draft consultation on the trials of e-scooters in England and Wales and the MACS consultation submission was shared with Transport Scotland officials and Roads for All members to ensure they were kept updated on the emerging legislation.
- **Cycling by Design** – Progress has been impacted by Covid-19. The guidance has now been evaluated by the working group and is expected to be published shortly.
- **Inclusive Design in Town Centres and Busy Street Areas** – The workstream continued to be an essential part of the Inclusive Design in Town Centres and Busy Streets working group. The WSP Research was published in February this year;

<https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/49143/inclusive-design-in-town-centres-and-busy-street-areas-transport-scotland-research-report.pdf>

Work is now ongoing to take the relevant Guidance forward, which will look at both physical design principles and inclusive engagement.

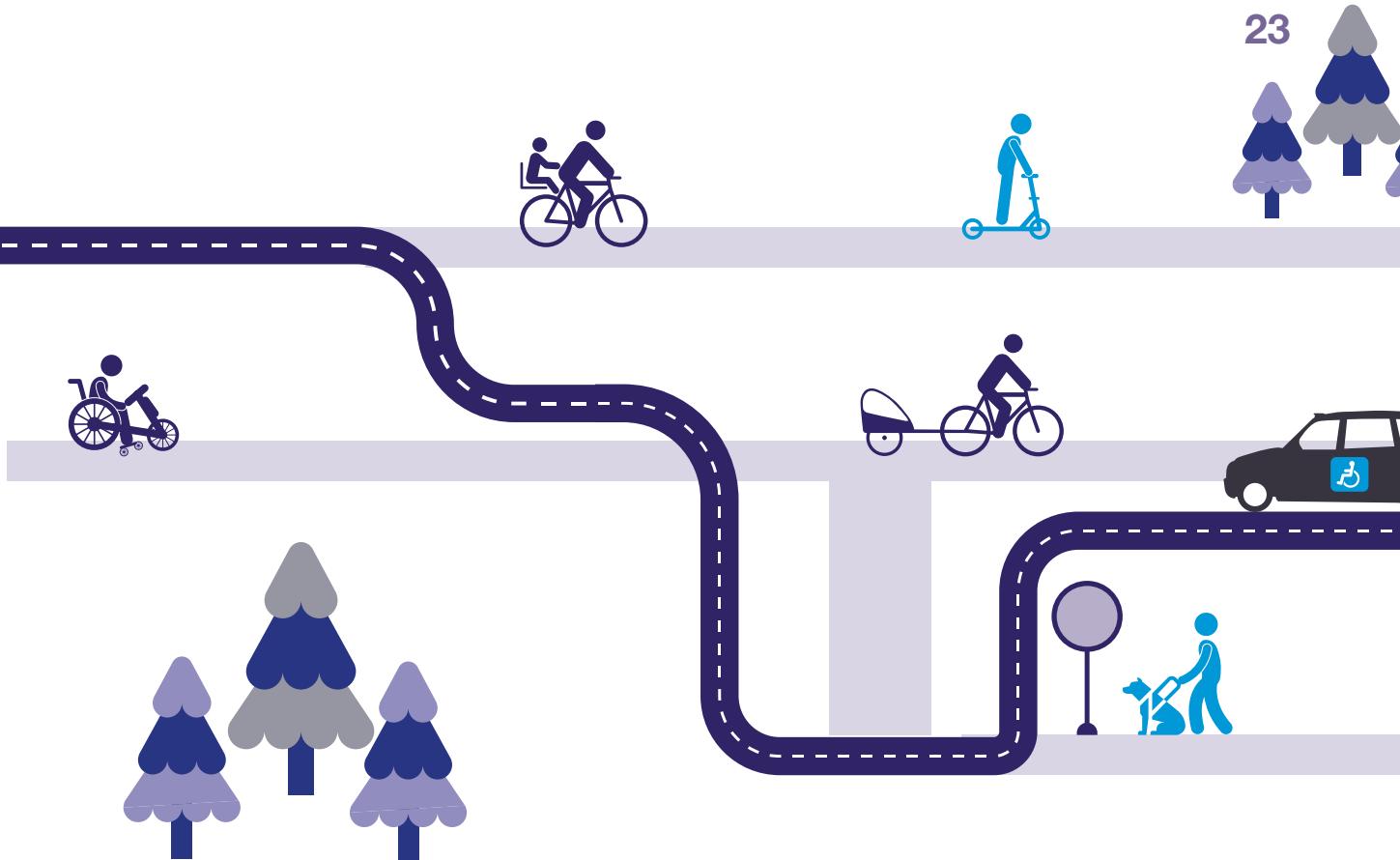
- **Living Streets Walking Summit** – This reporting year has also seen Keith provide a keynote speech at the Living Streets Walking Summit webinar where he presented on the need for streetscapes to be clear of barriers, obstacles and signage clutter. He gave detailed examples and emphasised the need for our streets to be available for everyone regardless of their mobility needs or disability.
- **Countryside For All Guide** – MACS attended the initial meeting of the “Reviewing the Countryside for All Guide.” The rewrite of this guide will be undertaken once funding has been identified.
- **Enterprise Scotland Challenge Fund** – This year also saw MACS involvement in assessing for the Enterprise Scotland Challenge Fund, formed to look at using technology and innovative methods to make electric vehicle charging more accessible to disabled people. MACS continues to be involved with both Enterprise Scotland and some of the successful organisations.

Active Travel

This has been another busy year in relation to active travel especially in MACS response to “Spaces for People”, which were designed to respond to the public health emergency by creating space to enable people to safely physically distance whilst walking, wheeling and cycling. Measures have included temporary 20 mph speed limits, pop-up cycle tracks, road closures and footway widening; in some instances, buses have also been re-routed and bus stops removed.

David Hunter and Keith Robertson produced and circulated MACS guidance on good access for councils planning temporary street measures, in May 2020 and (updated) in October 2020.

<https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/48310/temporary-street-measures-during-coronavirus-crisis-october-2020.pdf>



This was distributed to road authorities and key stakeholders, including Local Authorities, and shared via MACS Twitter platform. The substance of the guidance was also raised at both the Transport Transition Plan National Advisory Group and the Transport Equalities Network to highlight the issues being faced by disabled people.

The Convener also contacted Sustrans directly to offer MACS support both in their work around improving the public realm for active travel and in response to the current health crisis and continued need for physical distancing. MACS main interests are to ensure that any emerging initiatives for both temporary and subsequent permanent schemes account for the needs of disabled people and follow good practice guidelines around accessibility.

Sustrans also picked up on the blog written by the Convener on “**social distancing as a wheelie**” that was submitted to the Accessible Travel Hub - <https://accessibletravel.scot/> who had asked to share this with their contacts in Local Authorities, and through other networks, to highlight some of the current challenges and barriers from a lived experience perspective. This blog was shared extensively with the need for every council in Scotland to be responding to the issues identified and not just a selected few.

MACS have continued to stress the need for good quality and consistent EqIA's to be undertaken in their discussions with Cabinet Secretaries and Ministers.

In June last year, Susan Fulton attended the National Walking Forum meeting where a number of items were discussed including accessibility for disabled people and in particular the quality of the EqIA's that must be carried out by local authorities when delivering a SfP Scheme.

Susan will continue to attend virtually and focus on looking at the quality of EqIA's as well as how Local Authorities engage with disabled people, including monitoring, measuring and evaluating works after completion.

As, where appropriate, and where there is local support, these temporary structures move to permanence, David Hunter and Keith Robertson remain available to assist Transport Scotland, Sustrans and Local Authorities further.

One of the areas that the Convener has been actively pursuing is the exclusion of disabled people in bike and e-bike hire schemes. The Convener has raised this several times and provided examples of new hire schemes being introduced that fail to provide non-standard hire options. The Convener continues to raise this with Ministers, Transport Scotland Active Travel Policy Team, with Local Authorities and via Cycling Scotland.

In response to the Convener's concerns the Sustainable Travel team created and facilitated a Short Life Working Group with representation from MACS to assess the demand for non standard bike share. It was agreed that a survey would be launched to assess demand and ensure any solution implemented is sustainable, evidence based and right for the community it will serve. The survey went live on 31 May 2021.

Work in this area will continue, particularly as the Active Travel budget sees record increases, and to ensure disabled people are not left behind and excluded in these investments or with emerging opportunities.

MACS will continue to reach out to engage closely with the Active Nation Commissioner (Lee Craigie) to work together to ensure consistent and clear messaging around inclusive active travel.

Ending on some good news MACS, through discussions and dialogue, were able to secure an uplift **from £50 to £100 on the bike and wheelchair voucher** repair scheme which went live on 3 August 2020.

<https://www.transport.gov.scot/active-travel/scotland-cycle-repair-scheme/>

This now also covers repairs and maintenance to non-standard bikes and wheelchairs (brakes, tyres), which can be costly.

Rail

Marsali Craig and Hussein Patwa co-lead this workstream. They are assisted by Fraser Sutherland, Michael Tornow and Susan Fulton.

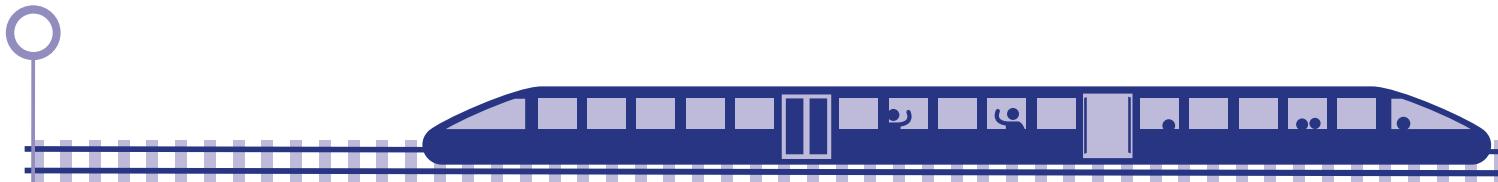
Below are some of the workstream's key achievements this year, however it would be remiss not to put this work in the context of the past year and especially, note the impacts on rail. ScotRail total passenger volumes in the financial year 2020/2021 were down 84 percent on the year before. At certain times, during the last year, volumes were down 90 percent on the previous year. New and reduced timetables have been operating throughout, although it should be noted that timetable changes were developed in consultation with key stakeholders including NHS Boards.

Also, the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity announced on 17 March 2021 that the Operator of Last Resort (OLR) will run ScotRail services after the end of the current franchise contract in March 2022 thus bringing rail services within public hands and under Scottish Government control, providing certainty for passengers and rail staff alike. The coming year will not be without its challenges for the rail industry as the industry and Government understand and respond to the ongoing impact of Covid-19.

In this context the Rail Workstream continued to engage during this period in the acknowledgement that the current public health crisis had significantly reduced and constrained the pace of work on areas they covered within their work programme for 2020-2021. This was in line with the diminished number of passengers (as above), using the network and the emergency footing adopted by Train Operating Companies (TOCs).

Passenger Assistance – The Rail Workstream's primary focus during this period was to ensure passenger assistance remained available and fit for purpose for disabled passengers making essential journeys. Particular attention was given to the guidance for staff and passengers that had been issued by rail operators, which offers sufficient flexibility to take account of pan-disability needs, whilst maintaining the spirit of the physical distancing guidelines mandated by Government. Steps were taken to ensure this guidance was widely distributed to disabled people via the MACS networks and Twitter platform and through their relationships and network of Disabled People Organisations (DPOs) and Disability Organisations (DOs).

MACS were pleased to note that despite demand being severely suppressed ScotRail strove to ensure that assistance was made available to those who continued to require it. In consultation with DPO's and DOs, ScotRail implemented a number of agreed physical distancing measures.



ScotRail also met their target of reducing the requirement to book Passenger Assistance to just one hour in April 2021. This is indeed good news and well outstrips that of other train operators within the UK.

Mystery Shopping – The Workstream became aware of a number of initiatives proposed by Train Operating Companies (TOCs), such as mystery shopping and use of the minor works budget, to benefit disabled people, encourage travel, and improve service quality that have not been deployed, despite this being a condition of their franchise award.

MACS anticipate taking forward discussions with Transport Scotland's Rail and Accessibility Teams once the current lockdown conditions and the pressure of the current health crisis has eased.

MACS are however aware that permission was obtained from Transport Scotland to postpone the assisted travel mystery shopping in 2019 and defer the funds into 2020 to deliver a more wide ranging mystery shop that took better account of representatives with hidden disabilities. As a consequence of the pandemic ScotRail have had to postpone all fieldwork due to a prohibition on non-essential travel. They intend to recommence this assisted travel mystery shopping later in 2021.

Minor Works Programme 2020-2021 – During this reporting period the Rail Workstream have also provided scrutiny, as a mandated stakeholder, of the ScotRail Minor Works Programme for 2020-2021 with concerns raised and advice provided as appropriate. They also acknowledged and welcomed the removal of inaccessible rolling stock on the Fife Circle, after focused engagement in this area to reduce inequalities.

Edinburgh Trams Project (Phase 2) – MACS were also cited as a valuable stakeholder in relation to providing advice and input into the design of Phase 2 of the Edinburgh Trams project. This included identifying specific challenges which may face visually impaired people using tram stops and proposing potential solutions to those challenges. This builds on the work MACS engaged in during Phase 1 of the project. The fact the design research team were signposted to MACS is a strong indicator of the recognition the committee has as a source of expert knowledge of and by disabled people and based on its success in past engagements.

Public Service Vehicle Accessibility Regulations (PSVAR) – The workstream also noted the extensions for exemptions to compliance with PSVAR, which were made until 31 December 2020 by the UK Department for Transport. MACS continue to remind TOCs of their obligation to provide transport for disabled people which is timely, accessible and suitable for their needs in the event that train services are disrupted (and regardless of these extensions).

Office of Rail and Road (ORR) Accessibility Stakeholder Forum – The workstream continued its representation on the ORR Accessibility Stakeholder Forum with oversight and comment on the Accessible Travel Policies issued by Scottish TOCs and the Passenger Assist handover protocol, a procedure designed to ensure that information on passengers needing assistance is passed on from one stage of their journey to another in real time by the staff assisting them.

Rail Delivery Group – The workstream also started attending the Passenger Engagement Forum run by the Rail Delivery Group, providing constructive feedback on the design and implementation of the new Passenger Assist booking app schedule for rollout in 2021-2022.

ScotRail Stakeholder Equalities Group – The workstream took the opportunity to raise awareness with both Transport Scotland and the ScotRail Stakeholder Equalities Group where concerns lay including those relating to the lack of EqIA's prior to the provision of guidance for assistance to passengers responding to the Covid-19 crisis.

As we move forward in the coming reporting year our August 2021 Development Day will be themed around rail and this will allow for the sharing of knowledge amongst the full Committee and a handover to the new Rail Workstream Leads, who will take our areas of engagement forward.



4

Ministerial Meetings



4. Ministerial Meetings

This year, despite the challenges being faced by Ministers due to the ongoing health pandemic, we were able to undertake a series of Ministerial engagements. These included committee wide discussions with:

- Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity, Mr Michael Matheson,
- Minister for Older People and Equalities, Ms Christina McKelvie,
- Minister for Energy, Connectivity and the Islands, Mr Paul Wheelhouse, and
- the newly appointed, Minister for Public Health and Sport, Ms Mairi Gougeon.

The key areas of discussion included:

- Equality Impact Assessments, the perceived failure for these to be conducted meaningfully and the need for disabled people, or their representatives, to be involved in the assessments;
- Reinforcing the need for public bodies (including Local Authorities) to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED);
- 20-minute neighbourhoods aspirations in urban, rural and Island settings and what this will mean to disabled people and older people;
- Equity of access to Health and Social Care Services, how to progress MACS recommendations from their phase-one work and how we address the evidenced transport failings;
- How we “lock in” lessons learnt from the multi-agency work to facilitate transportation to vaccination centres, to assist removing the transport barriers and challenges to accessing health and social care services;
- Exploring the positive initiatives (including joint working projects) for island and rural communities during Covid-19 and how these can be “locked in”;
- Receiving and discussing the updates on both the National Islands Plan Implementation Route Map and the Ferries Plan; and;
- Exploring Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) as a solution to accessible and affordable connectivity in both a rural and island setting.

The agreed actions were as follows:

Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs)

The Minister for Older People and Equalities updated MACS on an animated resource showing the experience of a virtual policy team as they develop an EqIA. She agreed to share this with MACS and the link can be accessed here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ARCg9AGB9U0&feature=youtu.be>

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)

The Minister for Older People and Equalities raised awareness with MACS that the PSED Review had been paused due to Covid-19 but it has been agreed that it will re-start with a two-staged process.

- **Stage one** would be a report on what has been learned from the pandemic response period about the effectiveness of PSED. This would be published in 2021.
- **Stage two** would look at issues being considered regarding the Scottish Specific Duties (SSDs) as part of the wider mainstreaming strategy. The new strategy will explore a range of ways to enhance compliance. The Minister confirmed she was open to all suggestions and invited MACS to feed in.

Spaces for People Schemes (SfP)

MACS updated the Minister for Older People and Equalities that in relation to SfP Schemes only 11 out of 32 Local Authorities who responded had stated that they had undertaken EqIA's ahead of implementation of the Scheme at a local level. There was a recognition that this infrastructure had to be implemented at pace however MACS stressed that more should have been done to ensure EqIA's were undertaken.

Taskforce for Human Rights

The Minister mentioned the National Taskforce for Human Rights set up in early 2019 and requested that MACS were sent the link to their work including the academic advisory panel.

Follow-ups from meeting with the Minister for Energy, Connectivity and the Islands on the National Islands Plan and Islands Plan Implementation Route Map

The Minister asked that his officials liaise with MACS to ensure they could feed in accordingly to the National Islands Plan Route Map.

The Minister apologised for not being able to discuss in full all of the questions MACS had indicated that they wished to raise. Two questions remained outstanding and MACS Ferries and Aviation Workstream met with the Minister's officials to continue dialogue:

- Progress on the National Islands Plan and the Ferries Plan and MACS involvement in both, and;
- Whether the Minister supported Transport Scotland exploring Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) as a solution to accessible and affordable connectivity in rural and islands settings.

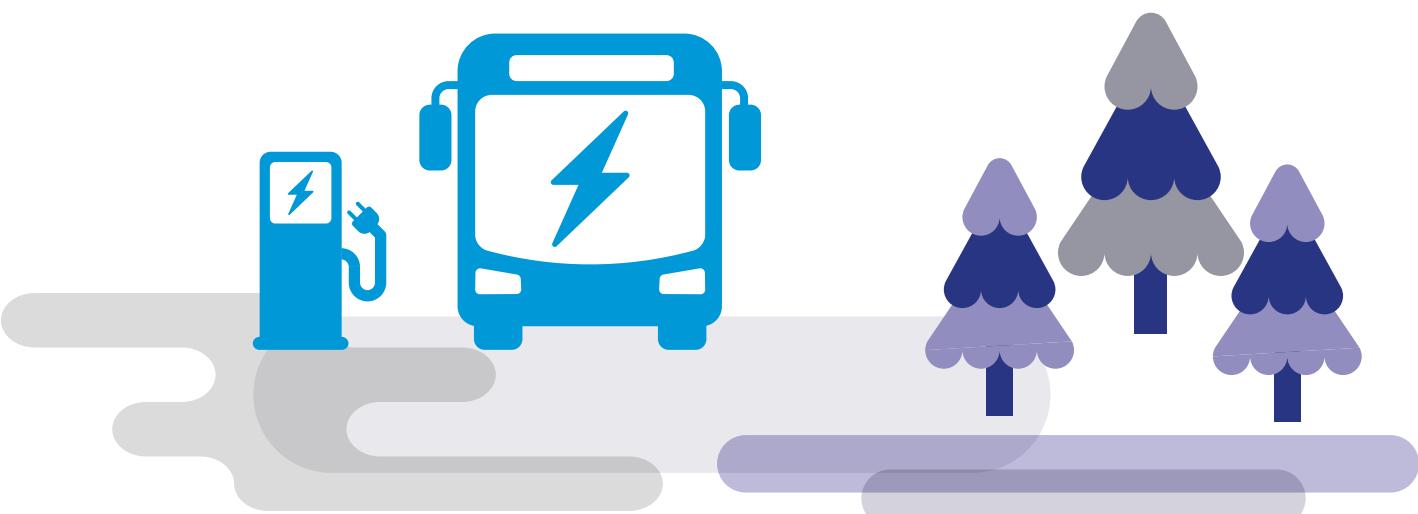
Of Note:

In June 2020 the Committee also had the opportunity to attend the Cross-Party Group on Disability at the request of Jeremy Balfour MSP. This provided an opportunity for MACS to share their expert knowledge and experience but also offered an opportunity to raise the profile of MACS remit, our work, what we do and what we have achieved to date.



5

Our Other Activity



5. Our Other Activity

Knowing Me, Knowing You – Team Sessions

A highlight for the Committee this year was undertaking a “Knowing Me, Knowing You” session where MACS invited guests from Enable Scotland (Amanda Taylor) and Passio (Ashley Peacock) to raise awareness of, and discuss hidden disabilities, looking at the travel challenges through the lens of people with learning difficulties, learning disabilities and neurodiversity.

An overview was given by Enable in relation to the difference between learning difficulties and learning disability. Examples were given of difficulties faced when reading and navigating timetables as well as navigating physical infrastructure such as steps, ramps and equipment difficulties as well as experiencing issues of drivers and conductors not fully understanding the needs of those with neurodiverse conditions. It was emphasised that some people can also face prejudice in terms of bullying and harassment.

Passio then further delved into issues faced by those with ADHD, autism and dyslexia, who often struggle with executive functioning skills and concentration and the ability to focus for long periods of time. This can have a huge impact for those trying to follow signs or timetabling, purchase the appropriate tickets, or use applications, but also adds challenges due to sounds and environments.

Solutions to some of the issues above could be in the form of training for staff, introduction of sensory rooms and quiet spaces in bus and train stations. Quiet carriages could be introduced where appropriate, paperless systems for travel too, so that individuals do not need to manage multiple pieces of papers or tickets.

In a separate session the Committee heard from the Chief Officer of DeafScotland (Janis McDonald). This session focused on the Four Pillars of Deafness and stimulated a great deal of valuable discussions.

I would like to thank our guests and Hussein Patwa, Michael Tornow and Joanne Devitt for the work and planning they have contributed to our Knowing Me, Knowing You Team sessions.

The Four Pillars of Deafness:

The Four Pillars of Deafness indicate that there are generally quite different barriers and solutions within those groups. It should also be made clear that everyone is an individual and should be respected as such.

Deaf/Deaf Sign Language Users (Congenital Deafness):

People that are born Deaf have significant challenges developing spoken language. Most, although not all, have British Sign Language (BSL) as their first language. Some may have cochlear implants or hearing aids. There are around 12,500 BSL users in Scotland.

Deafblind:

Those 4,000 or so people who face significant challenges through hearing-and-sight loss, which may often be as a result of Usher Syndrome or combination of deteriorating symptoms. Tactile language may be required.

Deafened (Acquired Deafness):

First language is often English. Some people may prefer sign language, generally depending on the age at which they became deaf. Hearing loss is significant. People may have bilateral hearing aids or cochlear implants. There are around 355,000 deafened people in Scotland.

Hard of Hearing:

Hearing loss is sometimes described as mild or moderate in medical terminology. Whilst often age-related it can also be as a result of damage, virus, or combinations of reasons. People may wear one or two hearing aids. There are around 600,000 hard of hearing people in Scotland.

The Committee as a whole found these discussions informative and thanked Amanda, Ashley and Janis for their time and commitment.

Development Days

This year the Development Days have focused on:

- **August 2020** – Unfortunately our planned Development Day on Bus Service Provision was cancelled.

The planned Development Days for 2021-22 are:

- **April 2021** – Inclusive Mobility in meeting the door-to-door journey challenge. At the time of writing this report the planning for this has been finalised and guest speakers confirmed. We will explore the barriers and solutions to undertaking successful door-to-door journeys. Kevin Hamilton, the newly appointed Scottish Road Works Commissioner, will also present.

Susan Fulton will present on inclusive infrastructure and Keith Robertson on barriers to meeting the door-to-door challenge. Keith will also chair this day and it will be used as a prelude to Keith handing over the reins of his workstream to Susan Fulton as his second term with MACS ends on 30 September 2021.

- **August 2021** – The planning has commenced for this development day, which will have a focus on rail, the work of the Railways for Everyone Board and progress from the Williams/Shapps Review. This session could also act as a handover session to the new Workstream Leads as both Marsali Craig and Hussein Patwa's second term with MACS comes to an end at the end of September 2021.

Scoping Day

MACS hosted a very successful Scoping Day this reporting year attended by the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity.

We raised the following issues with him:

- **Active Travel and Spaces for People** – ensuring these Schemes positively include disabled people. The Cabinet Secretary gave a little bit of background on SfP and stated that, although in general it was successful, he was aware of issues around accessibility. Advice and guidance has been provided to Local Authorities, which he thanked MACS for producing.
- The Cabinet Secretary updated that Local Authorities have been made aware of any arising issues and had already been asked to revisit the Guidance.
- MACS raised concerns, that in some cases, these temporary structures had added challenges for disabled people. MACS concerns remained that these temporary structures could be made permanent and as such could be building in additional challenges and barriers.

The Cabinet Secretary assured the Committee that Local Authorities which wish to make any structures permanent would be required to undertake a consultation process. He also stated that he would ask officials to consider ways to engage further with Local Authorities to ensure that they revisit measures where accessibility issues persist.

- **Performance Monitoring of the National Transport Strategy 2 (NTS2) –** This discussion focused on what can be done to explore and reduce the “mobility gap”. The Cabinet Secretary recognised the equality gap in accessing public transport, giving reassurances that the NTS2 Delivery Plan will allow monitoring and evaluation on an annual basis. He welcomed the concept of exploring the mobility gap (and how to close it) and asked MACS to work with his officials to explore this further.
- MACS continue to ask the Cabinet Secretary for his thoughts on how the 20-minute neighbourhood aspirations from PfG will play into NTS2. The Cabinet Secretary stated that the PfG makes clear links to inclusion and accessibility and the NTS2 also has inclusion, accessibility and human rights-based approaches at its heart. The pandemic has meant a significant change in travel behaviours, i.e. more active travel, less use of public transport and more people working from home. Encouraging people to stay local and familiarise themselves with their local areas, the 20-minute neighbourhood concept is an extension of this. The concept also fits well within NTS2 transport hierarchy in reducing demands for travel and fitting the well-being agenda, which in turn enhances individuals’ work/life balance.
- Digital Infrastructure, Traveline Scotland and rural bus services were also raised, where it was recognised that there was room for improvements to be made for disabled people.

The Cabinet Secretary also thanked MACS for its work in responding to the pandemic and also in raising the profile of access and inclusion issues with other Ministers and portfolios, and acknowledged that MACS influence and impact had grown significantly as a result.

The remainder of the Scoping Day covered:

- **Review and scrutiny of the NTS2 and the Accessible Travel Framework (ATF) Annual Delivery Plan –** MACS had prepared a discussion paper on how best to ensure Scotland’s transport is as accessible as it can be and if the ATF is still the vehicle to deliver that aspiration
- **Draft Strategic Plan –** The Convener had produced and circulated the draft Strategic Plan for 2021-2024 and Work Plan for the following year, built from MACS discussions and engagements. Key issues raised in relation to this were that there was a need for focused stakeholder engagement, post-pandemic planning and continuing with the supplementary twice-a-year committee meetings to discuss workstream areas of engagement to ensure alignment with the high-level objectives within the Strategy Plan and Work Plans.

The Convener agreed to make amendments to reflect these issues, bringing it back to the January 2021 meeting for final sign-off in line with the Committee’s planning cycle and governance requirements.

- MACS also suggested that Transport Scotland should explore hosting another major conference showcasing how accessibility is built into our future transport systems.

Four Nations Meetings

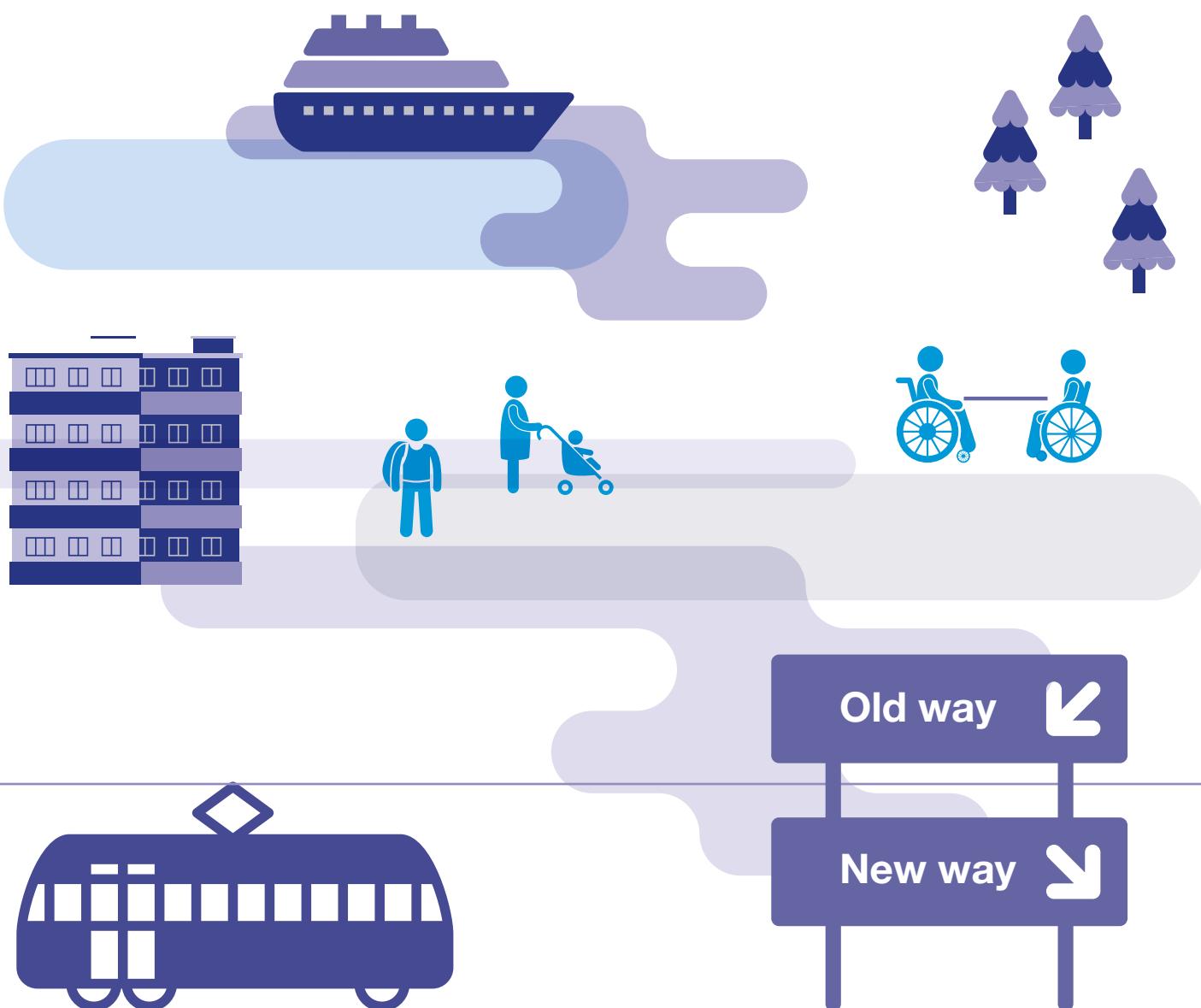
The period of this year's report saw a Four Nations Meeting take place on 8 October 2020. The common issues raised across the nations were as follows:

- Covid-19 Impacts – Guidance, active travel measures, assistance cards and “Build Back Better” messaging;
- EU Exit – Impact on assistance dogs;
- Personal Mobility – (i) e-scooters, (ii) Motability, (iii) the Highway Code Review, and (iv) pavement parking, and;
- The National Strategy for Disabled People (England).



6

Progress on our Sticking Points



6. Progress on our Sticking Points

The areas below are a carry-over from last year and areas we have found more difficult to make progress on regardless of our level of engagement or interactions and the advice given by MACS.

Accessible Travel Framework (ATF)

During this reporting year MACS received an update from Transport Scotland's Accessibility team on the progress of the ATF.

We were pleased to see, that despite many of the Accessibility Team being redeployed into Covid-19 priority areas, they prioritised the need to produce a Progress Report on the previous year's delivery plan.

<https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/48989/scotlands-accessible-travel-delivery-plan-progress-report-2019-2020.pdf>

MACS also asked for updates on the following.

- How progress and the impact of the ATF and Annual Delivery Plan on disabled people's travel will be measured. and;
- Existing or emerging linkages with other relevant strategies

MACS appreciated the work the team had taken to update them in all areas and also appreciated the time that they were taking to engage with disabled people to hear directly from them to inform the priorities for this year's Delivery Plan.

Below is progress on the ATF as at April 2021.

Progress with the 48 issues

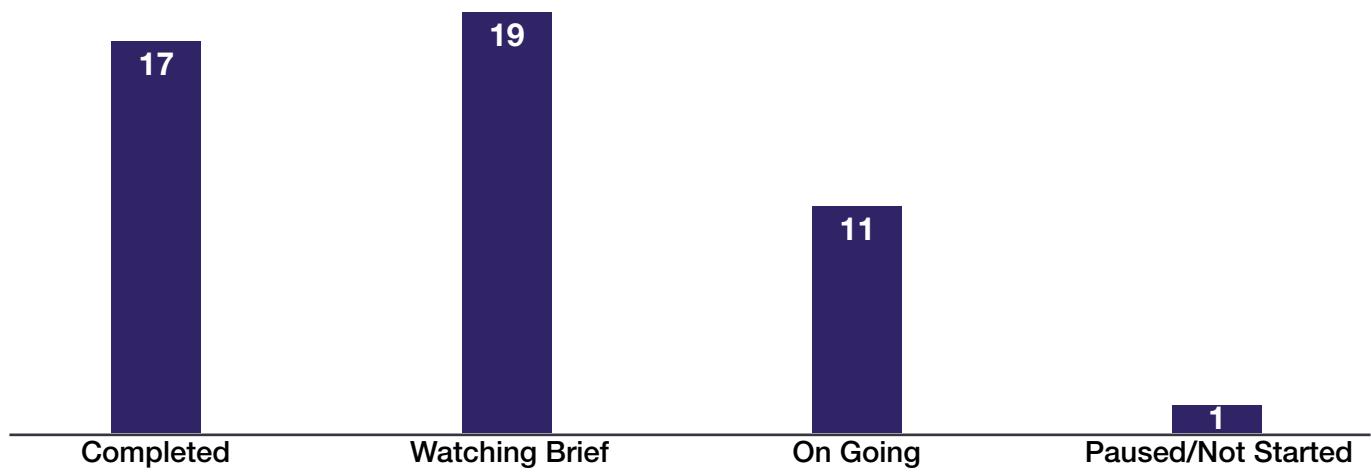


Image 2 - ATF update on 48 actions graph

Descriptor: the image shows progress on the 48 issues within the Accessible Travel Framework, with 17 completed, 19 described as a watching brief, 11 ongoing and one not started/paused.

Programme for Government (PfG)

MACS acknowledges that this year's PfG looked very different and welcomed the commitments within it and the strongly worded, prominent commitment to ensure equality and human rights is at the heart of the approach across all areas.

MACS further welcomed the narrative confirming that it is essential that we continue to strengthen the approach to equality and human rights across Government by listening to, understanding and involving those affected by these policies. MACS are pleased with this development, which has sat at the heart of discussions with Scottish Ministers over the past couple of years. It also strongly aligns from MACS "calls" within last year's Annual Report. This is a welcome approach from Government and MACS stands ready to offer support, commitment and innovative thinking where we can.

MACS recognises that the focus of the PfG is more important than ever, as we know disabled people and older people have been disproportionately affected by Covid-19.

Of particular interest to MACS within the PfG

- **Taking forward ambitions for 20-minute neighbourhoods** – Redesigning areas so people can meet most of their essential needs within a 20-minute walk or wheel. MACS will link this to making local neighbourhoods (paths, pavements, bus stops etcetera) accessible and obstruction-free, as we know there are many issues for disabled people navigating their local neighbourhoods. 20 minutes for many disabled and older people will still require local bus services or support to get about. Therefore the planning should also include the use of community transport infrastructure and Mobility as a Service (MaaS) innovations as well as the need for accessible parking where it is required.

MACS is grateful to Transport Scotland's Accessible Travel Team who supported a webinar in conjunction with Disability Equality Scotland to look at the concept through an equalities lens. This event was well received and attended and we are currently working with the Alliance Scotland and Disability Equality Scotland to explore these discussions further.

- The diagram below outlines the features of a 20-minute neighbourhood.



Image 3 shows the features of a 20 minute neighbourhood, which include local shopping and health facilities, education, green spaces, affordable and diverse housing, safe streets, active travel and public transport, and employment opportunities.

- Active Travel** – To align with PfG, MACS will look to advocate for more inclusive options for active travel (including bike and ebike hire schemes) and focus again on paths and pavements for walking and wheeling – as we are well aware cycling is not the only form of active travel, and pedestrians and wheelies are often overlooked. We will raise awareness of the importance of walking and wheeling as a part of active travel and its important connection to the first and last mile of a journey.

MACS will work to “**lock-in**” positive changes seen in the pandemic on active travel, where over **£500 million of investment over 5 years** for large-scale, transformational projects, access to bikes and behaviour change schemes are being introduced. We are already seeing some of this work by the likes of City Mobility who are keeping older and disabled people moving through the Scotland Cycle Repair Scheme. We hope to see more initiatives to make active travel inclusive for all.

- Low Emission Zones** – In relation to the further roll-out of Low Emission Zones, MACS will continue to work to ensure these zones don’t force disabled people out by inadvertently creating additional barriers and challenges. We will, therefore, continue to engage with Transport Scotland’s appointed consultants DeBlur who are developing the smart phone application and non-smart phone back-up that will enable exemption to emission zones for disabled people.

- **Review of Adult Social Care Services** – MACS welcomed the Review of Adult Social Care Services (the Feeley report). We had already written to and had discussions with the Chair of the Review Board to highlight the integral part that the availability of accessible and affordable transport plays to ensure access for social care not provided at home. We gained agreement for MACS Recommendation One from our phase-one work Transport to Health and Social Care to be noted within the review.

<https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/47301/working-together-to-deliver-improvements-march-2020-development-day-report.pdf>

Additionally MACS will continue to push for a widening of the national concessionary travel scheme to address the exclusion of those who qualify but are currently excluded from using the scheme as it is currently designed by Transport Scotland.

Traveline Scotland

MACS are pleased to see some improvements moving forward with Traveline Scotland. From last year's report we raised issues in relation to the accessibility of their android application. Traveline Scotland were also issued with a third party report in Summer 2019, and from their own web and app supplier in 2020, that identified a number of accessibility issues. Where possible these have been addressed in a fix in 2019 and 2020 and the app updated in accord, with more improvements expected over this year. Recent feedback to Traveline Scotland from MACS has again highlighted ongoing issues with regards to the Android app, website, and mapping/searching with TalkBack and other screenreaders, and Traveline Scotland has requested the supplier to revisit this issue. MACS are also keen to see the release notes detailing the full list of changes or improvements made to ensure all of the specified access barriers have been addressed where possible.

As Scotland's Coronavirus lockdown eases, the demand on the service, including from disabled people, will increase, especially as Traveline continues to remain the signposted go-to place for journey planning, particularly in Scottish Government communications. It is therefore essential that disabled people are able to plan their journeys, which includes the accessibility measures to meet their needs; for example, lowered kerbs, lifts, clear directions with marked distances, information on accessible buses, and stops etcetera.

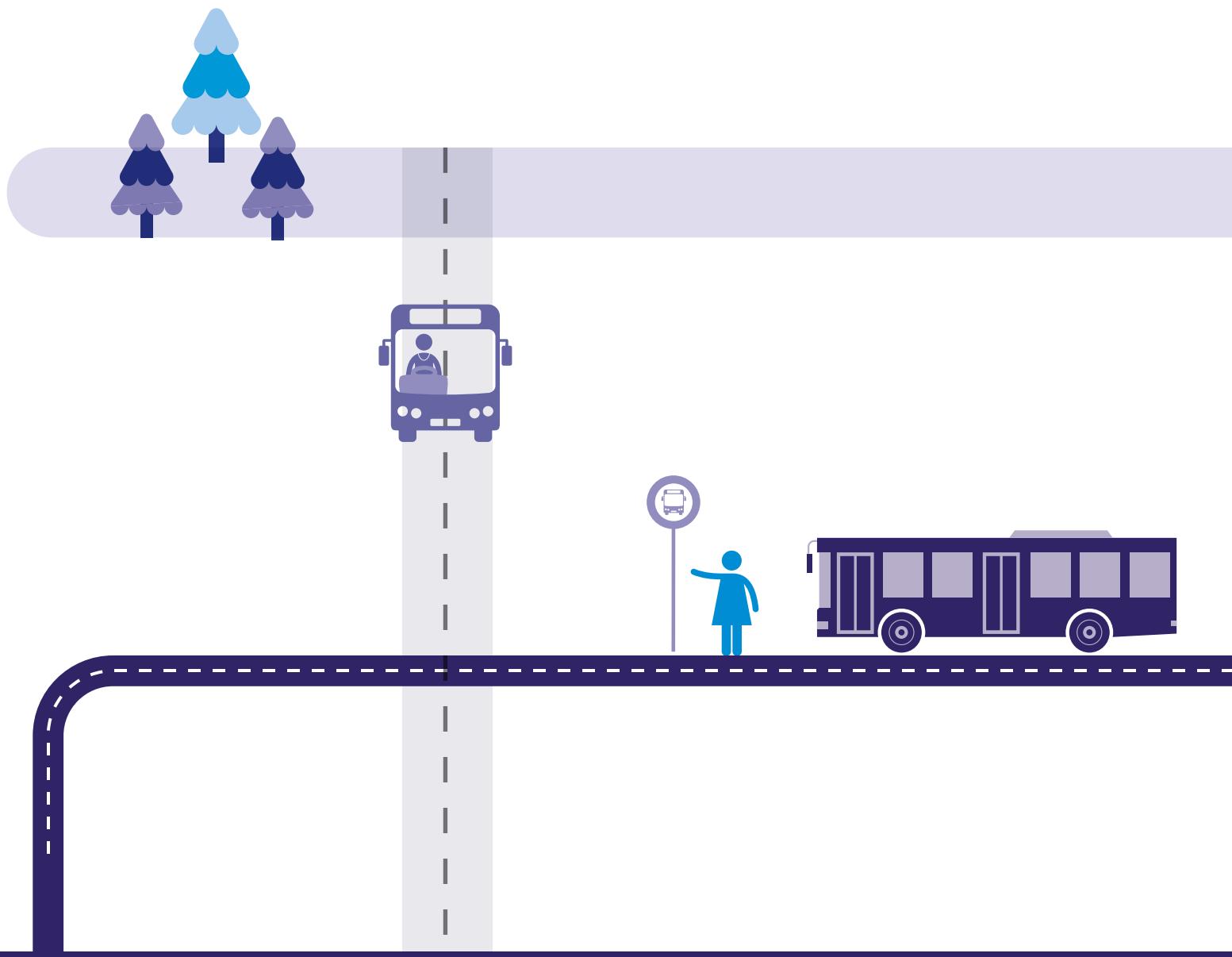
This is currently still not possible, with many people being excluded from using the journey-planning tool due to a lack of suitable data for the app to then provide for their accessibility needs. MACS will keep this in their sights and have alerted Scottish Ministers and Transport Scotland to these issues.

However, I am pleased to report that some progress and a step in the right direction is underway with Transport Scotland looking to procure for the next generation travel data, and a series of workshops are currently underway to define the necessary technical functions and non-functional requirements.

A webinar is being scheduled dedicated to exploring and understanding disabled people's user needs, looking at research undertaken to date, emerging service changes, and associated standards. The outputs from this will feed into this next stage in Traveline's development and MACS are looking forward to the outputs from this and future work.

Vehicle Service Access Regulations (PSVAR)

MACS are disappointed at the further extension to PSVAR granted by the UK Government and DfT. We understand that the latest exemption is now due to be in place until 30 September 2021. We have already raised our concerns about these exemptions being repeatedly extended, with Transport Scotland and through the Four Nations Forum, where our colleagues from the other UK access and mobility Committees share our frustration at the continued exemptions being granted, as the industry has had ample time to prepare. MACS are aware that this is a reserved matter. Reports to date suggest that DfT are continuing to review the situation.



7

Meet Our Committee – Introductions to new members



7. Meet Our Committee – Introductions to new members

This year we have been heavily involved in recruitment and selection of our new members. After a lengthy and robust recruitment and selection process we successfully recruited six new members. Three members will join MACS on 1 May 2021 with a further three joining on 1 October 2021.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank MACS members who assisted me with the “drop-in sessions” and the recruitment panel.

I would like to thank Hilary Stubbs and David Hunter for their additional commitments and flexibility in this time-consuming process. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Karen Armstrong from the Sponsor Team for her role as Chair and Kevin Mills of Scottish Government’s Public Appointment Team for his support and assistance in undertaking the virtual interviews.

We were pleased with the level of interest to join our Committee (36 applicants) and the quality, standard and enthusiasm of the applications. We welcome all our new members, whom will bring fresh perspectives and challenge as well as their lived experiences, knowledge and skills.

Over an extended period of time we have been holding three vacancies and I would like to thank members for taking on some additional work to fill the gaps; this has been greatly appreciated.

Those who will be joining the Committee on 1 May

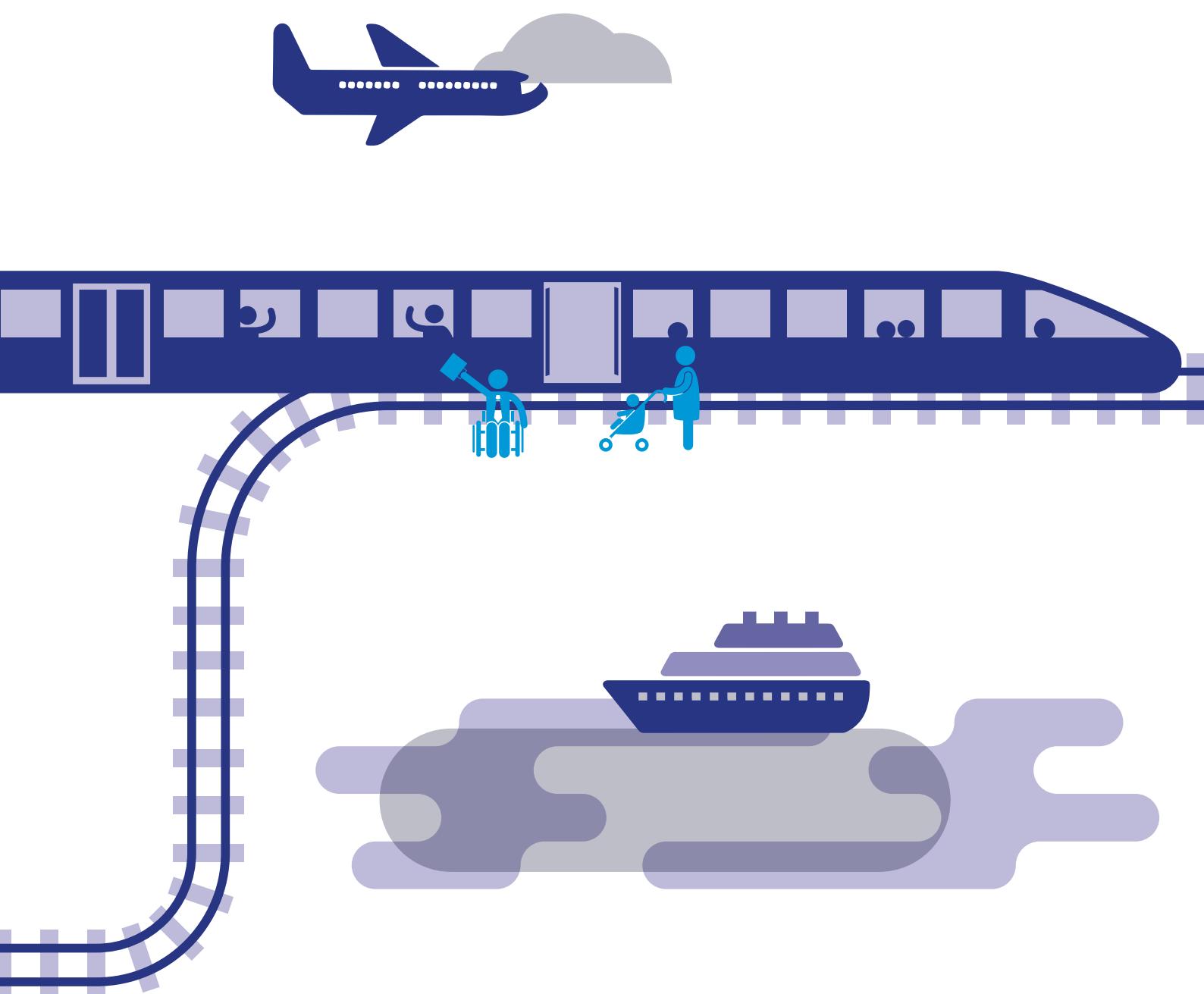
Graham Dunn – For the last 15 years, Graham Dunn has worked within the Community Transport Sector as Development Officer with Community Transport Glasgow, with Glasgow City Council and with Strathclyde Partnership for Transport. At the moment he is a consultant specialising in transport issues.

Pauline Kelly – Pauline Kelly is part of Amnesty International’s Media and Communications Team having previously been Media and Campaigns Officer.

Simon Watkins – Simon Watkins worked for 20 years in the Scottish Parliament as the lead Clerk to a number of Committees finally as Clerk to the Social Security Committee. He is also a volunteer with Spokes, the Lothian Cycle Campaign and previously spent six years as a Member of the Board of Planning Aid Scotland, serving as Treasurer and Vice Chair. And we will keep you updated on our further new recruits at a later date.

8

Our Strategic Aims (5 Objectives)



8. Our Strategic Aims (5 Objectives)

High-Level Objectives

We have identified five high-level objectives. Under each high-level objective we have set out what MACS plans to do in order to progress it and how we will know if we are making progress. This can be viewed by accessing our website or our Strategic plan for 2021-2024 from the link below:

<https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/49106/macstrategicplan2021-24.pdf>

<https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/49105/macstrategicplan2021-24-easy-read.pdf>

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

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

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

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

Objective Five: To review the National Transport Strategy and the Accessible Travel Framework Annual Delivery Plan on an annual basis, acknowledging progress, identifying blockages and gaps and making recommendations to assist with the delivery of commitments.

These objectives are underpinned by our Work Plans, which are reviewed annually.

Twice a year we revisit the areas of engagement for each workstream to ensure they remain current and relevant. Our Work Plan is available on our website or from the link below.

<https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/49104/macstrategicplan2021-24-workplan.pdf>

<https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/49103/macstrategicplan2021-24-easy-read.pdf>

Appendix One -- Our Consultations and Engagements

RECC: inquiry into construction and procurement of ferry vessels in Scotland – call for evidence	https://www.parliament.scot/S5_Rural/Inquiries/RECC_20191219_Ferries_inquiry_Call_for_Evidence.pdf
Consultation to revise Accessible Travel Policy (ATP) Guidance on rail replacement services	https://www.orr.gov.uk/search-consultations/consultation-accessible-travel-policy-guidance-accessibility-rail-replacement
Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010: extension of Part 2 Order Making Powers	https://consult.gov.scot/public-bodies-unit/public-services-reform-scotland-act-2010-extension/
Consultation on Low Emission Zones Guidance and Regulations	https://consult.gov.scot/transport-scotland/low-emission-zones/
NHS England and NHS Improvements for call for evidence to inform the review of Non-Emergency Patient Transport Services (NEPTS) in England.	https://www.transport.gov.scot/our-approach/accessible-transport/mobility-and-access-committee-for-scotland-macs#42413
Phasing out diesel and petrol cars	https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/47422/macrs-response-to-consultation-on-phasing-out-diesel-and-petrol-cars-april-2020.pdf
DfT Future of Transport Regulatory Review/Mobility	https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/future-of-transport-regulatory-review-call-for-evidence-on-micromobility-vehicles-flexible-bus-services-and-mobility-as-a-service
The impact of Covid-19 pandemic on equalities and human rights	https://yourviews.parliament.scot/ehrc/impact-covid-19-pandemic-equalities-human-rights/
MACS responses to DfT consultation on ending the sale of new petrol, diesel and hybrid cars and vans	https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/47422/macrs-response-to-consultation-on-phasing-out-diesel-and-petrol-cars-april-2020.pdf

MACS response to E-Scooter Definition Consultation	https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/47422/macss-response-to-consultation-on-phasing-out-diesel-and-petrol-cars-april-2020.pdf
MACS response to DfT Future of Transport Regulatory Review/Mobility	https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/47679/macss-response-to-dft-consultation-on-future-mobility-june-2020.pdf
The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on equalities and human rights	https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/47709/the-impact-of-the-covid19-pandemic-on-equalities-and-human-rights-macs-response-to-scottish-parliament-call-for-evidence.pdf
Travel with assistance dogs post-Brexit transitional arrangements – briefing paper	https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/47733/briefing-paper-on-post-brexit-arrangements-for-travel-with-assistance-jobs-july-2020.pdf
MACS response to the consultation on changes to the Highway Code	https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/48166/macss-response-to-the-consultation-on-changes-to-the-highway-code-september-2020.pdf
Draft Infrastructure Investment Plan	https://consult.gov.scot/infrastructure-and-investment-division/draft-infrastructure-investment-plan/consultation/my_response?user_id=ANON-FAT5-GHZN-7&key=4aeee2091602704aa029b4a911a0fd8703085d26
Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2030 Draft, for consultation	https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/48676/macss-response-to-consultation-on-road-safety-framework-november-2020.pdf

A consultation on potential revisions to the Code of Practice for Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies in Scotland – questions for consideration	https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/48641/mac-response-to-a-consultation-on-potential-revisions-to-the-code-of-practice-for-ministerial-appointments-to-public-bodies-in-scotland-october-2020.pdf
Ethical standards in public life: consultation on model code of conduct for board members of devolved public bodies	https://consult.gov.scot/public-bodies-unit/ethical-standards-in-public-life/



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