

Disability Impact Assessment

During the preparation of this Local Transport Plan there has been consultation with and involvement of disabled people, to ensure that the challenges faced by disabled people are identified, a broad selection of options are considered and that policies are developed that support disabled people as they use the transport system. The formal Assessment process seeks to identify the impacts of policies, either positive or negative, and to identify what other actions need to be taken. The process will need to continue as the Implementation Plan is developed.

Changes have been made to the Plan as issues have been raised as part of consultation or the Impact assessment process.

Issue	Response
<p>DIA - <i>Where the Transport Outcomes refer to transport accessibility for 'everybody', it should be expressly clear that this includes disabled people, people with long-term limiting illnesses and carers.</i></p>	<p>Chapter 4 paragraph 4.4 - <i>Extensive consultation resulted in changes to the proposed outcomes, including the addition of 'affordability', 'journey experience' and 'activities'.</i></p> <p><i>Consultation also highlighted the fact that 'everyone' really must include all people, specifically those living and working in rural areas and disabled people.</i></p>
<p>DIA - <i>The situation for many disabled people is that transport and accessibility is limited by the lack of suitable or usable transport, and the policies in the plan will not secure suitable provision as they stand; this needs to be recognised in the 'Challenges' section – i.e.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>That we have a significant population, around 20%-25% of the total, who are disabled or have a long-term limiting illness</i> • <i>That some of this population are unable to use existing transport</i> • <i>That this is a significant challenge that needs to be addressed.</i> 	<p>Chapter 5 Challenges - 20%-25% of the population are disabled or have a life limiting illness, which is above the national average = Some people are unable to travel as they do not have access to appropriate transport in the right place at the right time; others have limited opportunity to travel due to the transport options that are available.</p> <p>Lack of accessible vehicles for disabled people, especially taxis but also buses. Explore the potential to use taxi licensing to increase the numbers of suitable vehicles. = Some people unable to make any journeys and others with limited ability – wider impacts on accessibility to services, negative impacts on health and wellbeing</p> <p>Better awareness of issues for disabled people and associated changes in behaviour – small changes can make a big difference e.g. obstructive parking = Easier for disabled people to make journeys</p> <p>Integrate the Shopmobility service into the Plan = Provides a valuable town centre service, supporting the local economy and increases independence for the service users (with associated health and well being benefits)</p> <p>Extend blue badge parking to all day free parking = Supports eligible disabled people access employment and other facilities</p> <p>Improve access to and facilities at North Road and Bank Top Stations and increase patronage on the Bishop Line = Improves the journey experience, supports the economy, reduces carbon emissions, improves accessibility for disabled people</p>
<p><i>Where the Transport Outcomes refer</i></p>	<p>Add a specific policy highlighting that 'all' or 'everyone' includes disabled people –</p>

<p><i>to transport accessibility for 'everybody', it should be expressly clear that this includes disabled people, people with long-term limiting illnesses and carers.</i></p>	<p>Policy 14 – Promote independent travel and access to activities, services and facilities, in particular for those who are disabled or have a life limiting health condition</p> <p>Policy 16 - Facilitate the development of a strong community transport sector incorporating volunteer car driver schemes through partnership working with the voluntary and community sector.</p> <p>Policy 18 – Provide information on transport and travel options before and during journeys to help plan and improve the journey experience. This should include training, the use of technology, education and visible enforcement to address individual behaviours.</p> <p>Policy 19 – Improve waiting environments for passengers using rail, coach, local bus and taxi services, particularly for disabled people. Improve the quality of parking for all modes of transport.</p>
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A summary of the process follows:

Disability Equalities Impact Assessment Record Sheet

Policy Title: Darlington’s Third Local Transport Plan			
Policy Owner: Sue Dobson, Principal Transport Policy Officer			Date: 20/12/2010
Type of Assessment	Type 1	Type 2	Type 3
Is this a policy or action? POLICY			
<p>Overview:</p> <p>The Third Local Transport Plan sets out the local transport strategy for the period 2011-2026, and the implementation plan of schemes and initiatives for the next 3 to 4 years. It seeks to build on the policies and programmes pursued through LTP1 (2001-06) and LTP 2 (2006-11). LTP3 has been drafted and subjected to public consultation. Some of the consultation responses, outlined below, are concerned with improving plan outcomes for disabled people. A multi-strand Equalities Impact Assessment was carried out in November 2010. Cabinet will consider the findings of the Equalities Impact Assessment, any findings from this Disability Equalities Impact Assessment and all consultation responses in February with recommended amendments to the draft plan to produce a final approved version of the plan.</p> <p>One of the repeated difficulties in carrying out impact assessments of strategy and policy documents such as the Local Transport Plan is that disproportionate impact and disadvantage often emerge in the detailed implementation of strategies and policies and are difficult to identify in the policies themselves. At this early stage in the development of LTP3 the impact assessment can only highlight areas where issues could arise in the detailed implementation of policies. Detail will be developed through the annual Implementation Plans prepared to translate strategy into action,</p>			

and these will require further rounds of impact assessment.

The findings of the multi-strand EIA, reinforced by consultation responses, that are relevant to this DEIA are that:

- b) Where the Transport Outcomes refer to transport accessibility for ‘everybody’, it should be expressly clear that this includes disabled people, people with long-term limiting illnesses and carers.
- c) The situation for many disabled people is that transport and accessibility is limited by the lack of suitable or usable transport, and the policies in the plan will not secure suitable provision as they stand; this needs to be recognised in the ‘Challenges’ section – i.e.
 - That we have a significant population, around 20%-25% of the total, who are disabled or have a long-term limiting illness
 - That some of this population are unable to use existing transport
 - That this is a significant challenge that needs to be addressed.

What are the positive or negative effects that the policy or action will have on disabled people? *This and the following sections will be completed following discussion with disabled people*

Positive Impacts:

The Plan has identified real challenges faced by disabled people and the scale of the issues has been highlighted. The outcomes have been amended in light of consultation with disabled people and other groups. Policies have been amended to reflect the key challenges faced by disabled people and groups of people with specific impairments as appropriate.

It has been noted that changes to training are important to improve the journey experience for a wide range of people, including disabled people, but that more action is required to change attitudes.

A number of actions have been noted to achieve greater involvement by disabled people, in particular through the DEIA process, on an ongoing basis, such as assessment of the Transport Asset Management Plan and Network Management Plan.

Negative Impacts:

The Plan does not set out to have any negative impacts on disabled people, but this may be the result of the implementation process. Therefore it will be important to involve disabled people on an ongoing basis in scheme and policy design.

What evidence supports this? See detail below

Who was involved? Gordon Pybus, DAD; Tom Stebbings, MENCAP; Jane Woodward, DAD; Peter Roberts, DBC; Sue Dobson, DBC; Lauren Robinson, DAD; Gordon Hamilton, MIND and Reflections; Rosemary Berks, DAD and Dimensions; Andy Hart, DAD; Colin Light, DAD; Tracey Gedding, DAD – admin support; Mary Hall, DBC

What action will you take as a result of the impact assessment?

Where the Transport Outcomes refer to transport accessibility for 'everybody', it should be expressly clear that this includes disabled people, people with long-term limiting illnesses and carers.

Add a specific policy highlighting that 'all' or 'everyone' includes disabled people –
Policy 14 – Promote independent travel and access to activities, services and facilities, in particular for those who are disabled or have a life limiting health condition

Policy 16 - Facilitate the development of a strong community transport sector incorporating volunteer car driver schemes through partnership working with the voluntary and community sector.

Policy 18 – Provide information on transport and travel options before and during journeys to help plan and improve the journey experience. This should include training, the use of technology, education and visible enforcement to address individual behaviours.

Policy 19 – Improve waiting environments for passengers using rail, coach, local bus and taxi services, particularly for disabled people. Improve the quality of parking for all modes of transport.

ACTION – Traffic Manager, at the next review of the Network Management Plan should include consultation with DAD and possibly a DEIA if required.

ACTION – Sue – mention in LTP3 - investigate how we can achieve improvements through licensing and procurement

How and when will this action be monitored?

These amendments will be included the final Plan to be approved by Council as part of Council Policy.

The implementation of the plan will be monitored by Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee, including the monitoring of the Network Management Plan.

DBC will work with DAD to ensure that disabled people are involved as much as is feasible and practicable in the delivery of the Plan.

Darlington's Third Local Transport Plan Disability Equalities Impact Assessment

The Department for Transport published statutory Guidance on Local Transport Plans in July 2009 to support local transport authorities in producing Local transport Plans, as required by the Transport Act 2000, and as amended by the Local Transport Act 2008.

The guidance states¹:

‘Local transport legislation has, since 2000, contained an obligation for local transport authorities to have regard to the transport needs of older people and people with mobility difficulties when developing transport plans and policies.

The Local transport Act 2008 adds a new requirement to have regard to the needs of disabled people, both in developing and implementing plans. This broadens the scope of local transport legislation to bring it in line with the Disability Discrimination Act 2005.’

The Third Local Transport Plan sets out the priorities for transport in the Borough. It contributes to national transport strategy and supports the Tees Valley Statement of Ambition, but most importantly it has to support the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Using the social model of disability approximately 20-25% of all people in Darlington consider themselves to be disabled or to have a long-term limiting illness. This equates to 20-25,000 people. The number of this large group whose condition, impairment or illness would prevent them from using current conventional public or private transport will be much smaller, although we do not have specific information. Some disabled have very specific needs due to the nature of their impairment and this may result in them being unable to travel or have their travel severely limited (with a resulting impact on the quality of their life).

The following provides a summary of the involvement of disabled people and the application of the Multi Strand Equalities Impact Assessment to date.

Multi Strand Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA)

A self assessment was undertaken on 23 November 2009 and 22 December 2009 (Sue Dobson and Peter Roberts). This was at a very early stage of the process to develop the Third Local Transport Plan. In terms of impairment it identified a number of things that would remove barriers to access:

- *Physical access implications*

¹ Paragraphs 23 and 24, Guidance on Local Transport Plans, DfT, July 2009

- *Sensory impairment implications*
- *A need to link to the Local Development Framework, in particular for the location of services*
- *Independent Travel Training for pupils with learning difficulties*

A follow up EQIA self assessment was undertaken on 3 November 2010 and 19 November 2010 (Sue Dobson and Peter Roberts). This identified that the key groups of people who could be disadvantaged by universal transport provision that takes no account of their needs include people without access to cars, disabled people and people with long-term limiting illnesses, children and young people, and carers of people in these groups.

One of the repeated difficulties in carrying out impact assessments of strategy and policy documents such as the Local Transport Plan is that disproportionate impact and disadvantage often emerge in the detailed implementation of strategies and policies and are difficult to identify in the policies themselves. Therefore the impact assessment can only highlight areas where issues could arise in the detailed implementation of policies. It was noted that further impact assessment will be required on the implementation programme.

What the assessment did identify for disabled people was:

With regards to the policy – ‘Work in partnership with the private and voluntary and community sectors to adapt the existing transport network to meet more of the needs of older people and people with disabilities, limiting the need for specialist transport.’ – the issues and difficulties for disabled people using buses and taxis are well known, and have been reinforced in the discussions around the EIAs on Ring a Ride and budget proposals for supported bus services. These issues, and where adaptations or improvements to the existing network need to be focused, could be clearly stated.

The organisation of the plan gives the impression that the transport needs of older and disabled people are separate from mainstream transport needs, but disabled people need to access job opportunities. The content on pages 40 and 41 concerning the difficulty of accessing future jobs at the eastern end of the Tees Valley, and ensuring people can access local training and employment, should emphasise the need for provision to be accessible and inclusive of disabled people across physical and mental impairments. Car sharing may not be a practical option for some disabled people – provision in the wider Tees Valley is outside the scope of Darlington’s plan, but it should be clear about the implications of car-only options for some people.

Evidence

During the development of the LTP, consultation was undertaken with disabled people.

The ***first phase of consultation*** was considering the outcomes or goals that the LTP should be delivering. This included:

*24th November 2009
Talking Together event*

Presentation and workshop with local organisations and members of the public (open invitation) plus on-line forum to discuss the draft goals, identify any missing goals and decide if there should be a priority.

There was general agreement that the goals were right but that the Implementation Plan must be in place to ensure that the strategy actually delivers the outcomes and that it does not become just a list of meaningless statements.

An issue was raised by Gordon Pybus, Darlington Association on Disability, that when people talk about 'access for all' this is not always the case for disabled people.

Action – need to add a statement within the LTP that 'all' or 'everyone' explicitly includes disabled people.

March 2010

NWA Survey

In March 2010 a survey was commissioned by DBC to seek the opinions of a sample of Darlington residents to review transport needs and issues across the whole population and the specific needs of disabled people. The results of the NWA survey were used for the review of Ring a Ride and the development of the LTP.

The total sample was 352 people, questioned at 6 locations within the urban area of Darlington. 137 (39%) of these considered themselves to be disabled or to have a long term limiting illness. Just under three quarters of all respondents (74.7%) did not note any difficulties with transport (either difficulties arising because of their disability or the way that transport facilities are organised or run). However, half (50.4%) of those who considered themselves to be disabled or to have a long-term limiting illness stated that they did have difficulties using various types of transport. The main difficulties were associated with bus and rail travel. This included walking to and from bus stops, as well as issues with physical access onto vehicles (steps) and the attitude/behaviour of drivers.

The survey included a question on concessionary bus passes. 41.5% of all respondents had a bus pass, rising to 83.9% of those aged 60 years or over. As of December 2010 the numbers with a concessionary bus pass is as follows:

- Elderly – 19,277
- Disabled – 1,842
- Companion Elderly – 33
- Companion Disabled – 444

The numbers of people in the Borough that have a pass on the basis of disability is 2,286 compared to 19,310 who have one on the basis of age (12%). As approximately 20% of the population has a disability or long term limiting illness, it would be expected that more would have a bus pass on grounds of disability. However it is easier to apply on the basis of age, so the numbers of pass holders who may be both over 60 and eligible disabled may be higher.

The survey only included 3 people with a companion concessionary fares pass (0.63% of the sample). As companion disabled passes account for 19% of all disabled passes, these people are under-represented in the survey sample. This may be because disabled people that require assistance from a companion make less trips or may skew their trips to certain destinations (and are therefore not picked up when a survey is

spread over 6 sites). It has not been as easy to get the opinions of these people in a random survey.

Some issues were raised with taxis such as a lack of assistance from drivers and unable to accommodate wheelchairs.

The survey did not include people who are currently unable to make journeys.

Action – need to consider accessibility for the total journey- door to door – and identify how minor amendments can improve the journey or even make the journey possible at all.

Action – need to consider how to increase the availability of accessible taxi vehicles

Action – behaviour of drivers and other road users is an issue that has been brought up across a broad spectrum of transport users, including disabled and older people, but also young people. There needs to be some further work on how we can engender more consideration between groups using the highway and transport system.

The *second phase of consultation* was considering the challenges and options. A number of workshop sessions were run with specific groups from 31 March – 17 June 2010, and then Talking Together events were held in July 2010 to enable organisations and local people to get involved and develop potential ideas as options for delivering the goals. Included is the feedback from the disabled people's event, but also feedback from the events for older people and those living in rural areas as the potential isolation caused by a lack of transport services can be similar for all 3 groups.

26th May 2010

Older People

Invited through Growing Older Living in Darlington and Age Concern

There was a focus on improving bus services, but also on encourage walking and maintaining roads. Some of the options included:

- Completing the Inner Ring Road
- Managing the movement of buses and providing a bus station
- Providing all day blue badge parking
- Providing and enforcing the use of bus lanes, especially illegal parking
- Re-introduce a paid for concessionary schemes (i.e. previous local scheme)
- Coordinate streetworks better to reduce delays
- Roll out of real time bus information to key stops
- Smart ticketing – so do not need to carry money (good from a personal safety point of view)
- Car Club
- Electric cars
- More cycle parking required
- Personalised travel information, especially if you are new to the town
- More accessible taxis required
- All buses should be low floor
- More dropped kerbs are required
- Cycling on pavements is an issue and needs greater enforcement

- Better interchange at the rail station
- Require proper coach stops and passenger waiting facilities
- Need more residents parking
- Do not use green space to accommodate parking (verge hardening)

11th June 2010

Disabled People

Invited via Darlington Association on Disability

Transport is a priority for people with a disability. The personalisation agenda will provide people with greater choice, but only if suitable transport is available to enable people to access the services, facilities and activities that they need or want to use.

Many of the issues raised were challenges rather than options. Most require small scale improvements or changes in behaviour, some of which can be addressed through raising awareness of the issues that disabled people face or training.

- Car parking on pavements causing an obstruction
- Management of streetworks and building works, especially when they impinge on the footway
- Cyclists to be separated from pedestrians
- Real time information is good, but would also like audible announcements on buses and at bus stops
- Bus drivers are not always helpful, especially when communicating with people at bus stops before they have got onto a bus
- Disabled people would first and foremost like genuine travel choices, climate change is secondary. Need to provide choices that combine both whenever possible.
- Safety is an issue if pedestrian crossings are not working
- Panic buttons on buses would help people with learning difficulties
- To access employment and other services, need to be certain that can access a bus or taxi on a regular basis
- Consider using cheap alternatives when possible e.g dropped kerbs
- Review car parks to make accessible parking bays truly accessible
- Need to use all communications channels when changes come into effect on transport e.g. Twitter, Facebook
- Access to rail station is difficult – what about a travelator

17th June 2010

People living in rural areas

Invited via the Association of Parishes

Attendees from Sadberge, Bishopton, Hurworth, Neasham, Middleton St George, East Newbiggen and West Newbiggen.

Transport is seen as a vital service in rural areas, particularly for those without access to a car. There was a general consensus that the bus service that they currently get is good – on time, clean vehicles and pleasant drivers – and would like to see the services being more frequent. However there was an understanding that keeping the

existing services is crucial and any improvements would be an aspiration. Whilst concessionary fares are valued, they would rather pay and keep a bus service, than have a concession but no bus service on which to use it.

There were a lot of options to reduce carbon emissions:

- Electric cars and charging points for each village
- Car Club
- Enhanced rail services (especially using Dinsdale station)
- Better broadband in rural areas to support home working
- Cycle training and cycling groups to encourage more cycling, linked to better cycle parking at supermarkets
- Pool bikes or cycle hire in villages
- Promote more positive driver behaviour

To promote better safety

- 20mph speed limits in villages
- Extend the Community Speed Watch programme which has started in Sadberge

To improve access:

- Support the development of the Metro, enhancing the rail services for Dinsdale station
- More services to be provided locally e.g. post office, shop
- Safe walking and cycling route from Sadberge to MSG, also enhancing provision for those using mobility scooters (an increasing issue with an aging population)
- More dropped kerbs, especially at bus stops

To improve the journey experience:

- Conductors on buses could help older people
- Extend walking and cycling routes in rural areas – just because villages are in rural areas there is not necessarily good access to green space/infrastructure
- Stop HGVs operating through villages

The ***third phase of consultation*** which ended on 13 December 2010 was considering the draft LTP, including some strategic choices and possible options. There was a wide ranging response from stakeholder organisations and council departments. This included feedback as follows:

Darlington Association on Disability

The necessity of Shopmobility needs to be highlighted in the Plan, enabling people to keep their independence and dignity, contributing to wellbeing. (This is supported by evidence provided from a Shopmobility Users survey, DAD, 2010 provided as part of the consultation response).

The options spell out a basic acknowledgment of the transport issues which disabled people have in Darlington but there is no real commitment that these issues will be addressed.

Transport policy needs to work more closely with taxi licensing to make a positive difference to taxi and private hire provision in Darlington for disabled people.

There is no recognition that some disabled people have no transport provision at all. Unless it is identified, it will not be addressed.

Tees Valley Rural Community Council

It is useful to consider the rural dimension in the context of meeting the needs of older and disabled people, as rural isolation has some parallels in terms of limited travel choices. The role of the Community and Voluntary sector needs to be explored and potential inclusion in a bid to the Local Sustainable Transport Fund.

Bishop Line Community Rail Partnership and Friends of the National Railway Museum North east Branch

Consideration of a new DDA compliant platform to the north of the Bishop Line, providing good passenger waiting facilities.

New DDA compliant footbridge at Bank Top Station

Housing Renewals and Strategy, DBC

Improve accessibility and mobility, particularly for pedestrians, through better management of street furniture and signage

Development and Commissioning 0-11 years, Children's Services

Disabled children and young people do not have access to after school activities due to inflexible home to school transport travel contracts.

Healthy Darlington Business Group

Use of volunteers and volunteering networks to assist in reducing social isolation and addressing health and safety issues, through practical assistance and brokering of transport.

Additional consultation work on transport issues involving disabled people during the same time period has included:

Learning Disabilities Transport meeting – 26 January 2010, attended by 6 carers and a large number of service users. The attendees developed two lists – one of what is currently working, and one of what is not working.

What works well includes positive comments about public transport (trains are good – get help if needed; staff helpful at the train station; some staff on buses are helpful; a free bus pass works well; bus pass covers long journeys; companion bus pass for more independent travel) as well as council provided transport services (volunteer drivers work well; drivers and escorts are very good and understand the needs of the service users; transport always clean and tidy; wait until everyone sits down and puts their seat belt on; drivers and escorts are friendly).

What works less well for some is difficulties when bus services or bus stops change; lack of transport during snow; hate crime on public transport; cost of taxis; bus drivers are not always helpful; not enough buses on night time; confusion by bus drivers on the use of companion passes; public transport not suitable for wheelchairs (as they cannot be clamped in place); not enough accessible taxis; council transport forgets to

pick individuals up; lack of communication between council transport drivers and office; not enough buses in an evening

A *Disabilities Equalities Impact Assessment* was undertaken for the proposed withdrawal of the Ring a Ride Service. This concluded the following:

‘The loss of Ring a Ride would have significant negative impacts for the core group of regular users. It is difficult to quantify the much larger population who experience transport/accessibility issues and needs due to a long term limiting illness or impairment. Extrapolating findings from the NWA survey suggests that there could be up to 6500 people in the local population who experience difficulties in using buses, but it is clear that the scale of such need outweighs the impact of the potential loss of Ring a Ride. The evidence indicates that for the great majority of people with such issues and needs Ring a Ride is not a viable or effective solution, and it is appropriate to take this wider context into account in assessing the impact of the action of withdrawing funding from Ring a Ride.

It is not the role of the assessment to investigate and recommend ways of improving transport provision for disabled people. That role properly belongs to the Local Transport Plan (LTP) and the programmes that spring from it. However, it is appropriate to recommend that improvements be identified and brought forward in the preparation of LTP3, to act on the opportunity to counteract the narrow but potentially severe negative impacts of the action with wider positive benefits.’

Next steps

A meeting was held on 16 December 2010 with Gordon Pybus, Darlington Association on Disability, Peter Roberts, Policy Unit, DBC and Sue Dobson, Transport Policy, DBC.

*Gordon felt that the LTP provides a good summary of the issues and challenges faced by disabled people, but does not say **what** actions will take place to address the issues. In the main these can be minor tweaks to the existing mainstream provision such as addressing the behaviour of taxi and bus drivers; providing travel information in different formats; having greater consideration for wheelchair and scooter users during periods of snow; or utilising licensing to improve the provision of accessible taxis.*

It was agreed that potential ways forward include:

- *Formalising existing processes to ensure that the needs of disabled people are always considered;*
- *Use contracts and/or procurement processes to improve transport for disabled people;*
- *Raising awareness of disability issues amongst all staff working for or with the Council; and*
- *Developing new solutions that can be sustained on the medium to long term, potentially working with the private or community and voluntary sector and potentially as part of a bid to the Local Sustainable Transport Fund.*

The final stage was to take the draft LTP3 and the work on the DEIA to a meeting of the Equalities Group on 12 January 2011. The results of this meeting have been recorded in the DEIA Record Sheet

