National Baseline Survey Disabled Passenger results

Draft Report

June 2017

Produced by Disability Equality Scotland

1 INTRODUCTION

About this report

1.1 This report sets out findings from the National Baseline Survey with disabled users of public transport, which took place between May and June 2017. In total, 200 disabled people responded to the survey. The report findings will help inform future discussions and consultation on the issue of accessible travel in Scotland.

Aims of research

1.2 Disability Equality Scotland were to develop a national survey around the Accessible Travel Framework activity to obtain an instant picture of disabled peoples' views on specific aspects of public transport. The aim was to gather baseline information on experiences of accessible travel.

Methodology

1.3 The survey was designed in close collaboration with Transport Scotland's Accessible Travel team, and with input from the Transport Scotland steering group.

1.4 The survey topics followed the key outcomes of the Accessible Travel Framework; namely
- More disabled people make successful door-to-door journeys, more often
- Disabled people are more involved in the design, development and improvement of transport policies, services, and infrastructure
- Everyone involved in delivering transport information, services and infrastructure can support disabled people to travel.
- Disabled people feel comfortable and safe using public transport. This includes being free from hate crime, bullying and harassment.

1.5   A draft version of the survey was piloted with a small group of eight disabled people, all with different types of disabilities. They were asked to complete the survey, while thinking about whether the questions were easy to understand, and made sense.

1.6   Comments were collated after the pilot, and a final version of the User survey was agreed.

1.7   A link to the survey was sent to all 500+ members of Disability Equality Scotland to all 40 Access Panels and to our network of disability and equality organisations, with a view to disseminate the survey as widely as possible.

1.8   To make the survey as accessible as possible, an Easy Read version of the survey was produced and made available on request, as well as plain text and in email format. Two surveys were completed by telephone, with a member of Disability Equality Scotland staff asking the questions and completing the online form on their behalf.

1.9   The survey received 200 responses. Of these, the majority were female (63%) and had a physical disability (59% ,95 respondents).

1.10 The survey is at Appendix 1.

2   More people make successful door-to-door journeys, more often

Outcome 1
More disabled people make successful door-to-door journeys, more often.
"Helping all disabled people use the transport system in its broadest sense, when they want and as often as they want to."

Introduction

2.1   The first part of the survey gathered baseline information on the journeys that disabled people made by public transport. This included information on the mode of transport used, the frequency of travel and the reasons for travel.

Mode of transport (n=197)

2.2   The most common form of transport used by disabled passengers was the bus (63%, 124 respondents) followed by the train (50%, 99 respondents). Other forms of transport used by disabled people included private taxis (23%, 45 respondents) and accessible taxis (15%, 29 respondents).

2.3   A high number of disabled people travelled by car, either as drivers or passengers (60%, 117 respondents).

2.4   A small number of respondents stated that they regularly travel by tram (8%, 15 respondents), ferry (3%, 6 respondents) and bicycle (2%, 3 respondents). In addition, 12% of disabled people (24 respondents) stated that they travel regularly by air.

2.5   The survey also explored the types of transport that are not used by disabled people (n=189). Overall, disabled people were least likely to travel by bicycle (79%, 150 respondents).

"Bicycle is not physically possible as a mode of transport as my legs don't work properly."

"I am partially sighted (registered blind). In the UK there exists no cycle infrastructure that makes it safe for me to cycle with limited vision. Partially sighted friends of mine in the Netherlands for instance, can and do cycle, as they can benefit from large cycle ways, that are split directionally (like roads), and are segregated from both pedestrians and road ways."

2.6 There was very little use of trams among our sample (51% did not use the tram, 96 respondents). At the time of fieldwork, Edinburgh City is the only area with tram provision, and therefore use would be limited to those living or visiting Edinburgh.

"The tram doesn't go near my house or near anywhere I want to go that's not more accessible by bus."

"The tram I would not feel safe when boarding or alighting."

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

"Private hire vehicles are not wheelchair accessible."

"I cannot get into a private taxi."

"Private taxi companies tend not to accommodate wheelchair users."

2.8 Ferries were not used by 41% of disabled people in our sample (77 respondents). This was most commonly because of location; where disabled people had no need for ferry travel.

"Hardly get any opportunity to go on ferries. Would like to take my family on the ferry with our dog."

"We do not have a ferry near us."

2.9 26% of disabled people (50 respondents) said that they do not use air travel. For some, this is because they have no need to travel by air, because of the expense involved. Others commented that they found air travel too difficult or stressful to undertake.

"Don't like the hassle of getting through airports."

"Air travel due to difficulty getting on/off especially when non-disabled passengers are in too much of a hurry to get on/off."

"Air travel is just too complex to undertake."

2.10 Around a fifth (22%, 42 respondents) indicated that they do not use their local bus service. There were different issues mentioned for not using local buses. For example, a few respondents (three respondents) mentioned previous negative experiences involving prams. While others said that the issue was physically accessing the bus.

"I don't use buses since I had a couple of upsetting incidents involving buggies."

"Too tight a space to get my powered wheelchair into; and it is often filled with prams."

2.11 Others had difficulty accessing the bus, from the surrounding local infrastructure, such as navigating busy roads to access the stops.

"'Floating island' bus stops which requires me to cross a dual cycle lane is too dangerous for my guide dog and myself."

"Bus stops are too far away for me to access, and nowhere near enough to the house to be useful."

2.12 The train was not used by 18% (34 respondents) in total. For some people, there was just no train service in their local area, whereas others had difficulty accessing the platform. For others, previous negative experience of booking passenger assistance,

that did not go accordingly to plan, had led them to avoid train travel.

> "The trains were also notified in advance but on arrival they were not ready for the wheelchair and also the same for train back. Because these situations have arisen more than once and even putting in official complaints and nothing being done. It causes too much anxiety and stress to go on these methods of transport."

> "To use the train, you have to be able to use the steps on the overbridge which I can't always do."

Difficulty changing between modes of transport (n=190)

2.13 The survey asked respondents to detail whether they had experienced any difficulties when changing between modes of transport, such as when changing platform at a train station, or changing between bus and train, for example**.**

2.14 Slightly more (46%, 87 respondents) said they had experienced difficulties changing between modes of transport, than had not (44%, 83 respondents). Ten percent said they were unsure (20 respondents).

Distance between platforms

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

> "I have walking difficulties so travelling between different forms of transport is very difficult for me to do."

> "Often it can be difficult to change trains getting from one end of the station to the other with limited mobility."

> "Often they are quite far apart and involve lots of walking and carrying of bags."

Connectivity (timetables)

2.16   Equally problematic for respondents could be the timetabling of the service, which meant there was little time to alight from one service, and find the platform for the connecting service, or delays to one service, meant that the connection was missed. (17 respondents)

"When relying on public rail services to them catch a ferry it can be very difficult. If the train is delayed then the ferry most usually won't wait and you have to wait for a long time for another one."

"When changing trains, the lifts are hard to locate and sometimes the train timetables means that I don't have enough time to get to my platform at the pace I can move at."

Passenger assistance

2.17   For some respondents having passenger assistance available is the key to being able to travel on public transport. Some respondents (13 respondents) cited difficulties with passenger assist as the problem when trying to change between modes of transport. The most common issue was that no-one came to assist the disabled person, and in some cases, they were left 'stranded' on the mode of transport.

"Changing trains on a return trip from Inverness to Glasgow. Assistance had been booked however, staff failed to show at Perth. Luckily a member of the public came to the rescue."

"Being left on a train at Edinburgh Waverley and not receiving assistance to get off x2 times."

Getting on and off

2.18   For other respondents, the biggest difficulty they faced was physically being able to get on and off the mode of transport easily and safely. A few respondents reported difficulties with ramps being made available (5 respondents) while others struggled with stairs and room to manoeuvre.

"No ramps on trains. No lifts on busses. No wheelchair space available on bus if I do manager to use one. Made to feel like a burden especially on public buses."

"Buses move away before you are seated and this is an issue for me. Also, they do not always give you time to get to the door to exit before moving off."

Frequency of Journeys (N=191)

2.19 Survey respondents were asked to indicate how frequently they make journeys on public transport.

2.20 Responses were varied across this question. For example, a third (34%, 64 respondents) said that they travelled on public transport less than once a week. Eight percent of our sample (16 respondents) said they travelled once a week using public transport. Over one-third (37%, 72 respondents) said they travelled more regularly; between 2-3 times a week (20%) or 4-7 times a week (17%). A small number (15%, 29 respondents) were very frequent travellers, using public transport more than seven times per week.

2.21 The survey then asked disabled people to indicate whether they have increased or decreased the number of journeys they make on public transport (n=187). Most respondents said that their use of public transport has largely remained unchanged in the last six months (55%, 105 respondents said that it had stayed the same).

2.22 Around one-fifth (20%, 37 respondents) had increased their use of public transport. Reasons for increasing use of public transport included that some disabled people found themselves able to be more active (7 respondents) because they have increased support, either from a personal assistant, or from an assistance dog.

"I now have an assistant for a few hours per week, which allows me to leave my house."

"I now have a guide dog therefore my mobility has increased."

2.23 For other respondents (three respondents) their increased use of public transport was due to a deterioration of their health. Others (10 respondents) had changed their work, or life circumstances which had led to an increased need for public transport.

"I now have to visit elderly parent who is in care."

"Had to take bus more often to come to college and sometimes go home."

2.24 Just under a quarter (24%) said that they had decreased the number of journeys they made. For some, this related to the accessibility of the mode of transport (six respondents), or for health reasons, where the individual did not feel well enough to travel on public transport (five respondents).

"Stairs etc that are involved with public transport are increasingly difficult to navigate when you do not have the full ability of your hands and legs."

"There is nothing close enough. My physical strength and age means I use public transport less and less."

2.25 Other respondents commented on the unreliability of the service (two respondents) which made it more difficult to use public transport and had led several respondents to reduce their usage.

"It is too unreliable in our area. The buses are in a huge rate of disrepair."

"Unreliability of transport makes all journeys stressful."

2.26 Others had reduced their use of public transport because of previous negative experience on public transport. For example, one respondent had been confronted by other passengers and another's guide dog had been attacked.

Type of journeys (N=188)

2.27 The survey asked respondents to indicate what type of traveling they did most often. The most common journeys were for medical appointments (53%, 99 respondents), leisure (48%, 91 respondents) and shopping (48%, 91 respondents).

2.28 A smaller percentage of respondents used public transport to travel to work (34%, 64 respondents) while a few respondents travelled for education (12%, 22 respondents) or for day trips and holidays (22%, 41 respondents).

2.29 Visiting friends and family (43%, 80 respondents) was also a popular reason for using public transport. Over a quarter of respondents (28%, 53 respondents) said they use public transport 'just to get out' and often this was for volunteering opportunities.

"Attending disability forums and conferences outside my local area."

Barriers and challenges when travelling on public transport (N=173)

2.30 The survey sought feedback on barriers or challenges disabled people face when travelling on public transport. Overall, there were several challenges identified. The most commonly cited was the accessibility of the mode of transport (49%, 84 respondents).

"Biggest problem is the high and wide step you have to make to get onto trains – very dangerous."

2.31 The frequency of the service was also a barrier for many disabled travellers (42%, 72 respondents) as was the suitability of the route (41%, 71 respondents).

"The bus timetables aren't the greatest. Less buses and route changes meaning sometimes have to walk further. Fewer buses also mean it's a struggle attending appointments at certain times."

2.32 Another important issue that prevented disabled people from travelling on public transport was the accessibility of the local area, to get to the transport (36%, 62 respondents). This included 'floating' bus stops in cycle lanes, navigating busy stations with little information or tackling streetscapes filled with street furniture or A-boards.

"More people making it even harder to navigate stations too many folk standing around blocking paths and view of signs and notices and direction boards."

2.33 Some respondents had previous negative experience of travelling on public transport (25%, 44 respondents).

"Mums with buggies on buses who refuse to collapse their pushchair. My electric wheelchair doesn't fold."

2.34 Others felt that the lack of changing places toilets (20%, 35 respondents) was a barrier, preventing them from traveling

Aspects of travelling which are important to disabled people (N=185)

2.35 Overall, the most important aspect of traveling on public transport was the chance to retain some independence and freedom (72%, 134 respondents).

"Allows you to live a normal life."

"Being able to go myself wherever and when I want to travel."

2.36 For others, the important aspects of public transport were that it allowed disabled passengers to travel safely (49%, 91 respondents) and also to travel with confidence (45%, 84 respondents).

> "I can relax en-route. I can only sustain short bursts of effort and with public transport, especially trains, I can simply get on the train and relax until I get to where I am going."
>
> "Knowing there are paid staff available should an emergency arise."

2.37 The ability to travel on public transport for free, or at a reduced cost was important to 48% (88 respondents) while for over half the respondents (46%, 86 respondents) public transport was necessary as they were unable to drive as an alternative.

> "I cannot drive for longer than 15/20 minutes so if I need to go somewhere further away, I have to use public transport."

2.38 Other issues cited by respondents included 'gets me out the house' (39%, 72 respondents), the frequency of accessible vehicles (26%, 48 respondents) and whether the service provider has had disability awareness training (34%, 63 respondents).

Satisfaction with accessibility of public transport (N=183)

2.39 The survey asked respondents to state how satisfied they were with the accessibility overall of public transport in their local area. Slightly more respondents were satisfied overall (40%, 74 respondents) compared to those who stated their dissatisfaction (36%, 66 respondents). Of these, 15% stated they were 'very satisfied' compared to 13% who responded 'very dissatisfied'. 22% remained neutral and stated they were neither satisfied, nor dissatisfied with the public transport in the area.

Improvements in transport services (N=185)

2.40 Our survey asked respondents whether there had been any recent improvements in transport services in their local areas. This question helps to set a baseline for future improvements over the lifetime of the Accessible Travel Framework.

2.41 Overall, 70% (130 respondents) stated that there had been no recent improvements. Just under a fifth (17%, 32 respondents) said that they had noticed improvements. The improvements noted by respondents included improved attitude and behaviour of staff, introducing audio announcements on bus routes and allowing scooters access to trams.

"The drivers on Lothian buses have started having stop announcements turned on for every trip."

'The trains to Glasgow on the Ayr line are very clean and more regular, with better express trains every rush hour period."

"Edinburgh Gateway station has made huge improvements in my ability to travel. Much less 'attitude' if I turn up for a rail journey that has not been booked in advance."

"Mobility scooters now allowed on Edinburgh trams."

"Dundee has the largest amount of accessible taxis in any Scottish town or city that I have seen. Something to be commended."

"East Lothian buses, improved services beyond Musselburgh from Edinburgh."

3 Disabled people are more involved in the design, development and improvement of transport policies, services and infrastructure

> Outcome 2
>
> Disabled people are more involved in the design, development, and improvement of transport policies, services and infrastructure.
>
> "Necessity of disabled people being involved in all aspects of transport to help show what works for them."

Introduction

3.1 This part of the survey sought feedback on how disabled people could be better involved in the design,

Involvement in decision-making (N=184)

3.2 The survey sought feedback on how best to involve disabled people in decisions about local transport services. Surveys and consultations (82%, 150 respondents) were thought to be the most useful way of engaging, as well as hosting some focus group discussions (67%, 124 respondents) or holding community events (48%, 88 respondents). Other suggestions made by disabled people included:

- Set up a national panel of disabled people
- Roadshows and open days for disabled people at transport providers
- Have disabled people trial new routes for accessibility

3.3 Most importantly however, was the need for genuine discussions between transport providers and disabled people, who should be treated as 'experts' and used at all stages of the decision-making process.

"Actually, getting face-to-face with transport operators at a high level, more than just posturing, but real engagement that has an impact."

4.   Everyone involved in delivering transport information, services and infrastructure can support disabled people to travel

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Outcome 3
Everyone involved in delivering transport information, services and infrastructure can support disabled people to travel

"Importance of ensuring that those working at all levels in the transport system can understand the needs and wishes of different people and their needs, including mobility, sensory, mental health issues and hidden disabilities."

Introduction

4.1   The survey then explored how transport providers could better support disabled people to travel, by asking how they could better understand the needs of disabled people. The survey also collected any examples of good practice locally.

How can transport providers better understand the needs of disabled people (N=155)

4.2   There were several clear suggestions for ways in which transport providers should better understand the needs of disabled people. Overwhelmingly, most respondents felt that it was fundamental that transport providers engaged with disabled people, by meeting with them, talking and importantly, listening to what they had to say (45%, 69 respondents).

"Connecting, collaborating and communicating with real disabled people who use their transports - Deaf, Deafblind, Deafened and Hard of Hearing. Don't forget BSL (British Sign Language) users."

"Listen to disabled people, don't just assume everyone is the same; everyone has different needs."

4.3   Another idea, identified by just over one-quarter of respondents (26%, 41 respondents) was to involve transport providers in some sort of role-play or shadowing, whereby non-disabled transport

providers attempt to make a journey in a wheelchair, or blindfolded so that they can experience some of the same difficulties.

> "By experiencing for themselves the current difficulties faced: I firmly believe everyone involved in decisions should be required to, for example, use a wheelchair for a day to experience exactly the day to day issue and obstacles disabled people face."
>
> "Shadow them. Physically get on route with them and watch to see what their struggles are."

4.4   Training for transport providers was also very important in helping them to understand the needs of disabled people ; particularly those with hidden disabilities.

> "Transport providers need awareness training especially deaf awareness training and frontline staff need communication skills training."
>
> "More training on invisible disabilities."

Local examples of good practice (N=86)

4.5   The survey asked respondents to detail any examples of good practice from their local areas, for example where transport providers had excelled at providing an accessible service. Examples included where passenger assistance had been helpful, where bus drivers waited until passengers were seated or called out the route number or stop for visually impaired passengers.

> "Passenger assistance at both Glasgow Queen street and Glasgow Central stations is extremely good, helpful and proactive in the case of Queen street."
>
> "Lothian buses in Edinburgh do a good job. The staff recognise me and point me in the right direction. They always shout when my stop is coming up."

4.6   Specifically mentioned were both Lothian Buses and McGill's buses, both of these operators had trained their bus drivers to wait until passengers were seated before moving away.

> "Driver on McGill's bus was quick to offer to put the ramp down for me to get on the bus, as I was in the wheel chair. He also asked if I was alright once I was seated."

> "Lothian buses are excellent and most of the drivers display patience and understanding."

4.7   Others had found accessible taxis to go above and beyond to accommodate their needs as a disabled passenger.

> "I have a regular accessible taxi driver who is fantastic and goes out of his way to accommodate my lifestyle, I.e. Picking me up at 1am in the morning after gigs, he usually finishes a lot earlier."

4.8   And train staff were also praised for assisting disabled passengers.

> "I travel frequently by train between Kirkcaldy and Haymarket and it is a pleasure to deal with the staff at both stations who go far beyond the call of duty. I would say the same of Queen Street Station in Glasgow."

4.9   There were several examples of community transport providing an excellent service to disabled passengers. Particular examples were noted in more rural areas.

> "Caithness Rural Transport volunteer drivers are superb."

> "Community Transport in Badenoch and Strathspey."

5 Disabled people feel comfortable and safe using public transport.

Outcome 4

Disabled people feel comfortable and safe using public transport. This includes being free from hate crime, bullying and harassment.

"Experiences of disabled people during journeys, making sure people don't feel anxious, confused or worried, and not subject to abuse, mistreatment or hate crime."

Introduction

5.1 The final questions in the survey related to Outcome 4 of the Accessible Travel Framework, about disabled people feeling safe when using public transport, specifically free from abuse or mistreatment. The questions sought suggestions on what changes would help disabled people to travel, as well as gathering experiences of hate crime or abuse.

What changes to information would make the greatest difference to your ability to travel on public transport? (N=111)

5.2 The survey asked disabled passengers what changes to information would make the greatest difference to their ability to travel on public transport. The comments were mixed, but there were several common themes.

Accessible Timetables (14 respondents)

5.3 Having timetables printed in large font, and in simpler formats would be a great help to disabled people. Also the location of the timetable could be an issue, and it was suggested that if these were at an 'accessible height' it would benefit many travellers.

"Clearly legible bus timetables in 12 font as a minimum and at the centre or lower part of the noticeboard, not in the highest corner!!"

"Bus stop timetables printed in large print and at an accessible height. Not everyone is over 6 foot with perfect eyesight."

Audio Announcements (10 respondents)

5.4   The introduction of audio announcements, particularly on buses was thought to make a huge difference to disabled passengers, in terms of reassurance of where they are, and when to alight. This was also mentioned as important at train stations, where audio announcements have to be clear to allow passengers to travel independently.

"Talking information on buses on what stop is coming up."

"Adjust the volume and clarity of tannoy announcements at stations and on trains."

Changes to service announcements (8 respondents)

5.5   Disabled passengers commented on the need for clear and up to date information if there is a change in the service; such as a delay or a cancelled service. This could mean implementing live updates at bus stops (audio) and online.

"When bus stops are temporarily closed, I need to know exactly how far away the temporary stop is- notice online and at the stop in advance of changes would be extremely helpful."

"When trains or buses are cancelled please provide details of alternative ways to make your journey at the time of cancellation.

Connectivity (6 respondents)

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

"Better linked timetabling to different modes of transport."

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

Passenger assistance (5 respondents)

5.7   Improvements to passenger assistance, such as having staff trained in disability awareness and available to assist passengers at stations would make necessary improvements for five respondents to our survey.

> "Specialised personal service from transport staff who have been trained in specific areas of disability who can ensure customers pass through their travel journey with as little fear and inconvenience as possible."

> "There's no substitute for an actual human who can help. And get staff trained in disability access."

Wheelchair accessible information (4 respondents)

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

> "Better ticketing and booking for wheelchair spaces; ability to go online, check if a wheelchair space is booked, or book it if it is free, turn up and travel."

> "Having disabled seating available in the same location on every train."

Up-to-date access guide (3 respondents)

5.9 There was another suggestion to have a 'one-stop-shop' for information including route planners on how to reach your destination, where to change, the accessibility of the station or stop, as well as information on parking spaces for blue badge holders. There is some learning from this that could be added onto the Accessible Travel Hub.

> "An easily accessible, mobile friendly route planner where I can put in where I am and where I need to go, and it can show me the best route, where to change, what the accessibility of the stops are like, etc."

> "A single point of reference, in accessible formats e.g some local buses are not included on the current Travel Scotland app."

Abuse or mistreatment

5.10 The final set of questions in the survey asked respondents about their experiences of abuse or mistreatment while traveling on public transport; either as a witness or a victim.

Seen or experienced abuse or mistreatment (N=177)

5.11 First of all, 43% (77 respondents) said that they had seen or experienced abuse or mistreatment on public transport. Over half (53%, 93 respondents) had not. Those who had witnessed abuse or mistreatment stated that it was most likely from other passengers (70%, 58 respondents) while almost half of those responding to this question 49%, 41 respondents) said the abuse had come from the bus driver.

5.12 Fourteen percent (12 respondents) of respondents had witnessed train staff in situations of hate crime, and 11% (9 respondents) reported seeing other travel staff involved.

Who was this abuse towards? (N=74)

5.13 In most cases, the abuse or mistreatment was aimed towards a physically disabled person (58%, 43 respondents). Increasingly, those with hidden disabilities, such as autism were also the subject of abuse, according to 28% of respondents (21 respondents). Those with visual impairments and learning disabilities were witnessed being harassed by 22% and 20% of respondents respectively.

Nature of the abuse (N=81)

5.14 Those responding that they had witnessed forms of abuse or mistreatment indicated that this was most commonly verbal abuse (75%, 61 respondents) compared to physical abuse (9%, 7 respondents).

Targeted abuse (N=81)

5.15 More than half of survey respondents to this question (57%, 46 respondents) felt that the person had been targeted for abuse or mistreatment because of their disability.

Reporting abuse (N=80)

5.16 Less than one-third of respondents stated that the abuse they witnessed had been reported (30%, 24 respondents); some were unsure what happened as a result (26%, 21 respondents) while others were sure that the incident had not been reported (44%, 35 respondents).

Action taken as a result of reporting (N=74)

5.17 As a result of reporting the abusive incident, only a small number of respondents (5%, 4 respondents) said that any action had been taken. Most respondents either did not know what happened (49%, 36 respondents) or did not think anything had happened as a result (46%, 34 respondents).

6   Summary

6.1   The findings from this survey of disabled travellers indicated that overall, disabled people experienced difficulties when travelling on public tranpsort, and that this was a combination of physical access issues, difficulties accessing inclusive information and incidents of abuse or mistreatment.

6.2   Very few disabled people had noticed improvements in their local transport services (17% said they had) which is not surprising, given more than half of transport providers said they had not made improvements, nor intended to.

6.3   The importance of having access to public transport was clear; disabled people relied on a service which helped them to maintain some independence; however around 40% stated they were satisfied with the service they currently receive. This is in contrast to transport providers, who were very confident they were able to provide for different disabled peoples' needs (for example, 83% of providers were satsified they were responsive to the needs of physically disabled people). Disability Equality Scotland will take forward providing materials and information to transport providers on disability, access and equality to help raise awareness.

6.4   Disabled travellers indicated their willingness to take part in surveys, and discussions with transport providers to give their feedback on transport provision. They also suggested the best way for transport providers to understand their needs, was to accompany them on a journey. Providers also made this suggestion in their survey.

6.5   Most disabled people just wanted the chance to have genuine discussions with transport providers. The mini-summits arranged by Disability Equality Scotland in the coming months will provide an excellent opportunity for providers to meet with disabled people and discuss the barriers.

6.6   There were some examples of specific transport providers offering a good service to disabled passengers. As this is a baseline survey, we would hope to build on these over time.

6.7 As Disability Equality Scotland continues its work around hate crime with Transport Scotland, more information can be passed to transport providers around recognising and reporting hate crime as around 40% of respondents said this was an issue for them. Data from transport providers suggests that they feel confident at recognising issues of abuse or mistreatment, but there is little evidence how this is managed, and what impact this has on passengers.

7 Demographic information

Introduction

7.1 The survey collected some demographic information on respondents. This included information on age, gender and disability.

Gender

7.2 Almost two-thirds of respondents were female (63%, 110 respondents) compared to 36% (64 respondents) who identified as male. Three respondents (1%) did not divulge their gender.

Age

7.3 The sample of respondents tended to be older, with 60% (104 respondents) over 50 years old (with 23% of these being over 65). Just under one-fifth of respondents were under 35 years old (29 respondents).

Disability

7.4 Respondents were asked to detail from a pre-populated list, which description of disabil ity best suited them. Overall, 59% (95 respondents) stated they had a physical disability, and 38% stated they had a long-term condition. A third (33%, 54 respondents) were blind or visually impaired, and 15% (25 respondents) had a mental health condition. A smaller percentage, (7%, 11 respondents) had a learning disability.

Further research

7.5 The survey asked for contact details of those who would be willing to take part in further research, whether this be by telephone, email or in group discussion. We received the contact details of 21 respondents (a response rate of just over 10%). These can be passed to Transport Scotland.

APPENDIX 1   National Baseline User Survey

Baseline Survey – User Survey

Outcome 1
More disabled people make successful door-to-door journeys, more often. "Helping all disabled people use the transport system in its broadest sense, when they want and as often as they want to."

Modes of transport

1. What transport do you use most often? (Please tick all that apply)

Bus		Accessible taxi	
Train		Ferry	
Bicycle		Car	
Private Taxi		Air Travel	
Tram			
Other (please write in)			

2. Are there any forms of transport you don't use? (Please tick all that apply)

Bus		Accessible taxi	
Train		Ferry	
Bicycle		Car	
Private Taxi		Air travel	
Tram			
Other (write in)			

3. Please tell us why you don't use this/these form of transport?

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4. Have you experienced any difficulties changing between modes of transport? (e.g from bus to train, or from train to ferry?)
Yes
No
Not sure

4b, If so, can you tell us more about the difficulties you experienced?

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Frequency of travel

5. How frequently do you make journeys that involve at least one kind of public transport? (Please tick one option)

Never (Please go to Q13)	
Less than once per week	
Once per week	
2-3 times per week	
4-7 times per week	
More than 7 per week	

6. In the last six months, have you increased or decreased the number of journeys you make on public transport?

Increased	
Stayed the same	
Decreased	
Not sure	

6b.If you answered increased or decreased, please tell us why?

Types of journeys

7. What type of travelling do you do most often?
(Please tick up to three options)

Work		Visiting friends and family	
Leisure		Day trip/holiday	
Shopping		Education	
Medical appointments		Just to get out	
Other			

Barriers to public transport use

8. What are the barriers or challenges you face when travelling on public transport? (Please tick all that apply)

None		Lack of information about the service	
Cost		Fear of abuse or hate crime	
Accessibility of mode of transport		Previous negative experience	
Frequency of service		Accessibility of streetscape/surrounding infrastructure to get to transport	
Suitable route		Lack of changing places toilets on route	
Other (please write in)			

Benefits and satisfaction

9. What aspects of travelling on public transport are important to you? (Please tick all that apply)

Saving money/free travel	
Gets me out of the house	
Gives me independence/freedom	
Allows me to get to places where I cannot park my car	
I can travel with confidence	
I can travel safely	
I cannot drive	
Punctuality of service	
Frequency of accessible vehicles	
Service provider's training/disability awareness	
Other (please write in)	

10. How satisfied are you overall with the accessibility of public transport in your area?

Very satisfied	
Satisfied	
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	
Dissatisfied	
Very dissatisfied	
Not sure	

11. Have you noticed any recent improvements in transport services in your local area?

Yes	
No	
Not sure	

12. If yes, please tell us about these.

Outcome 2
   Disabled people are more involved in the design, development, and improvement of transport policies, services and infrastructure.

"Necessity of disabled people being involved in all aspects of transport to help show what works for them."

13. How best could disabled people be involved in decisions about local transport services? (Please tick all that apply)

Community events	
Focus group discussions	
Surveys and consultations	
Something else	

Outcome 3
   Everyone involved in delivering transport information, services and infrastructure can support disabled people to travel
"Importance of ensuring that those working at all levels in the transport system can understand the needs and wishes of different people and their needs, including mobility, sensory, mental health issues and hidden disabilities."

14. How can transport providers better understand the needs of disabled people? (Please write in)

15. Are there any examples from your local area where transport providers have done a good job at helping disabled people to travel?

Please tell us here.

Outcome 4
Disabled people feel comfortable and safe using public transport. This includes being free from hate crime, bullying and harassment. "Experiences of disabled people during journeys, making sure people don't feel anxious, confused or worried, and not subject to abuse, mistreatment or hate crime."

Information

16. What changes to information, if any, would make the greatest difference to your ability to travel on public transport? Please tell us here.

Abuse or mistreatment
17. Have you ever seen or experienced abuse or mistreatment when travelling on public transport?

Yes	
No	
Not sure	

18. If yes, was this from… (tick all that apply)

Other passengers	
Bus drivers	
Train staff	

Other travel staff	
Someone else (please write in)	

19. If yes, was this towards…(tick all that apply)

A physically disabled person	
A person with learning disabilities	
A deaf person or someone who is hard of hearing	
A person with a visual impairment	
Someone with a hidden disability (e.g. autism)	
Other	

20. What was the nature of the abuse or mistreatment?
Verbal abuse
Physical abuse
Something else (please write in)

21. Do you think this person was targeted because of their disability?
Yes
No
Not sure

22. Was the abuse reported?
Yes
No
Not sure

23. Was any action taken as a result?
Yes
No
Not sure

Disability Equality Scotland are conducting ongoing research with Transport Scotland about disabled peoples' experiences of public transport. Would you be willing to take part in any further research? Please indicate below.

Telephone interview	
Focus group discussion	
Face to face interview	
Further discussion by email	

Please leave your contact details below so that we can get in touch regarding further research. Your details will be held securely and all your responses to the research remain confidential.

Name
Telephone number
Email address

Demographic questions
The questions below are optional. These questions help us to make sure we gather views from lots of different types of people.

Disability / Long term condition
Do you have any of the following conditions which have lasted, or are expected to last at least 12 months? Please tick all that apply

☐ Deaf, deafness, hard of hearing or deafblindness

☐ Blindness or other vision impairment

☐ A Physical Disability

☐ A Learning Disability

☐ A mental health condition

☐ A long-term illness

☐ Prefer not to answer

☐ Other – Please write

Gender
☐ Male   ☐ Female   ☐ Prefer not to answer

Age Range
☐ Under 25   ☐ 25-34   ☐ 35-49   ☐ 50-65   ☐ Over 65