

6.3 Public Transport

OBJECTIVE

To ensure a public transport system of the highest quality which conveniently meets all major medium and longer distance movement demands to and around Edinburgh, and which is the main means of medium and long distance travel. It will offer competitive journey times, integrated ticketing at reasonable prices, comfortable and accessible vehicles, high quality and accessible stations, stops and interchanges and comprehensive information for both visitors and residents.

ISSUES

- 6.3.1 The main challenge for public transport today is to provide a safe, convenient and easy to use means of travel regardless of the reason for travel, frequency of trip or familiarity with the area and it must do so in a way which is accessible for all and affordable. Public transport, be it bus, rail, tram or a more specialised form of community/accessible transport has a major role to play in ensuring quality of life through enabling access to employment, health care, education and leisure opportunities. It is only through the overall integration between all forms of public transport that the above objective can be met, and by ensuring full integration between public transport and other travel modes such as walking and cycling.

Travel by Bus

- 6.3.2 Due to its dense urban development, traditionally low bus fares and concentration of jobs and services in the city centre, Edinburgh has one of the highest rates of bus use per person in Britain. Every day Lothian Buses carry over quarter of a million passengers and have on average experienced 3.5% passenger growth each year since 1998. Public transport is crucial in maintaining the accessibility and therefore economy of the city centre. It is the main means of travel for those who live in the 39.5% of Edinburgh households which do not own a car. It is also vital that we have a convenient, reliable, cheap and fast public transport system if we are to encourage any kind of modal shift from trips by private car.



City buses on Princes Street

- 6.3.3 It is the bus perhaps which has the potential to make the greatest contribution to modal shift as, unlike the train or tram options which have fixed routes, it is reasonably flexible in where it can travel. It can also respond quickly to changes in demand by increasing frequencies and changing routes or hours of operation. One of the main difficulties facing the bus industry however, is congestion. The number of vehicles on the road in our urban areas means that reliability is affected and journey times become longer thus reducing the attractiveness of bus travel.
- 6.3.4 In acknowledgement of reliability issues and in order to strengthen the performance of bus services in Edinburgh, the Council has in recent years financed the provision of bus priority measures designed to improve bus journey times. The introduction of Greenways has been followed by bus priority measures on the A1 and A90 corridors and by the introduction of the A7/A701/A772 Gilmerton, Newington and Dalkeith

- Road areas Quality Bus Corridor and the A702 Morningside/Bruntsfield Quality Bus Corridor. These types of measures can be relatively effective in promoting bus use. The A90 scheme for instance, involved the introduction of a ground breaking Queue Management System (QMS) which has delivered significant journey time reductions to bus travel on the A90 eastbound (into Edinburgh) in the morning peak and westbound in the evening peak hours. The scheme has also produced journey time savings for all other traffic on this route although the greater saving is for bus travel. The Council will seek to ensure that the needs of cyclists and pedestrians are catered for in implementing major bus schemes to ensure effective integration. The West Edinburgh Bus Scheme will see the implementation of a guided bus and on street bus priority from west to central Edinburgh and will incorporate provision for cycling.
- 6.3.5 The Council is also implementing a number of on-street interchanges at key locations across the city, to make it easier and more attractive to change between buses. This programme includes Haymarket Interchange and East End Interchange, providing interchange between buses and trains at Haymarket and Waverley stations respectively.
- 6.3.6 If full benefit is to be realised from bus priority schemes, it is vital that such schemes are rigorously enforced. In partnership with Lothian and Borders Police, the Council intends to bring about the early introduction of camera enforcement of bus lanes. This has been extremely successful in London. The role of bus mounted cameras, together with street mounted cameras, is currently being investigated.
- 6.3.7 Protecting stops from the effects of parked cars so that passengers – especially the elderly and the mobility-impaired – can board and alight easily is also very important. This work contributes to the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act. To this end the Council has a strategy of auditing bus priority, traffic management and road safety schemes to ensure bus boarders are included where appropriate. Further to this, bus stop clearway legislation has now been enacted which means that the Authority can designate a bus stop clearway without need for a lengthy legal process which can then be enforced by city car parking attendants. This directly tackles the issue of inconsiderate/illegal parking preventing buses accessing bus stops and resulting in difficulties for passengers.
- 6.3.8 As well as providing for journeys into the city centre, funding has been secured for the provision of bus priorities and better quality infrastructure on routes serving Edinburgh's other main centres of economic growth in North Edinburgh, Little France and Newcraighall, and The Gyle/Edinburgh Park. This Access to Growth initiative will be in place by mid 2006 and will primarily improve access by public transport to major employment and service areas through providing bus priority at key junctions on orbital routes as well as installing new cycle and footways.
- 6.3.9 In order to provide people with a viable alternative to use of the car, it is vital that public transport services to locations outside the city centre are significantly strengthened. As well as the continued provision of bus priority measures on routes serving the main generators of demand, this will require major improvement in interchange facilities and multi-modal ticketing, so that the transport network is convenient and easy for both regular and occasional users. Together with the transport operators and with start up funding provided by the Scottish Executive, the SESTRAN partners jointly facilitated the delivery of an integrated ticket covering the south east and central Scotland area. This ticketing will provide unlimited travel on bus and some rail journeys and is administered by Transport Initiatives Edinburgh (**tie**) on behalf of the participating operators. This One-Ticket initiative has been a

major step forward in providing integrated travel. Another success has been the complete redevelopment of the Edinburgh Bus Station in St Andrew Square, which was managed by the Council and opened February 2003. This provides a high quality environment for bus passengers and makes a significant contribution to improving the image of bus travel. The Council is committed to working with neighbouring local authorities to improve public transport facilities such as interchange and park and ride facilities, thus encouraging increased use of public transport.

6.3.10 Readily available and easily understood information is essential if we are to be successful in attracting more people to use the bus therefore the provision of timetable information at bus stops is essential. The responsibility of providing this information in Edinburgh lies with the bus companies who demonstrate their efficiency by the fact that between 90 and 95% of the 2,200 bus stops in the Council area have timetable information displayed at them. Traveline Scotland provides a national database for the public to call for public transport information or access using the Internet. The Council supports this by maintaining an all operator timetable database, which then feeds into Traveline.



Bus stop information

6.3.11 Funding has been secured for a Real Time Information (RTI) system in the City. Initially this will operate along the A701/A7 Quality Bus Corridor but additional funding will see this expanded to cover other main routes. This type of system acts to both improve public perception of bus travel and gives instant information for the user, and potential user, at the point of use thus significantly contributing to attracting new passengers. This initiative will be delivered in partnership with a major bus operator.

6.3.12 The Council is committed to working with both neighbouring authorities and operators on a partnership basis to deliver a high quality integrated public transport network for the city. The RTI project, along with a number of others, demonstrates how effective partnership working can be in improving services on the ground. The Council fully intends to develop further bus service infrastructure on the basis that operators contribute towards the costs of implementation and that they link the introduction of such improved measures with improvements in service frequency and quality. Examples of this can be seen through the recent significant increase in commercially provided bus services in Edinburgh. The introduction and development of Lothian Buses service 22 providing a fast and frequent link between Ocean Terminal in Leith and Edinburgh Park and the extension and rerouting of services into the new Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh, are two such examples.

6.3.13 The Council is also willing to make use of whatever options appear most effective in delivering progress through partnership working, including possible use of Statutory Bus Quality Partnership Schemes, as well as voluntary arrangements. If, however, the delivery of an integrated, high-quality multi-modal network can not be brought about through use of these mechanisms alone, the Council will apply to Scottish Ministers for the introduction of a Quality Contract regime to cover the operation of some, or all, bus services in the Edinburgh area. This option could be used to ensure the future integration of tram and bus services, and could involve a joint application involving adjacent local authorities.

6.3.14 Revenue funding for subsidised bus services from the Council amounts to around £1 million a year and is used to provide socially necessary services for communities where a bus service does not operate commercially. This funding supports around 30 services throughout the week. Further to this, it is worth noting that the travelling public of Edinburgh benefit by the fact that the major operator in the city, Lothian Buses plc is largely owned by the Council and as such works to smaller profit margins than do the majority of commercial bus operators. This means that more services can be provided on the ground for the public, with no cost to the public purse.

Travel by Rail

6.3.15 The Council has a very good record in the delivery of local rail schemes. The only new passenger railway to open in Scotland since rail privatisation, Crossrail, has provided a new cross-city service linking the Dunblane-Waverley line through to Newcraighall on the east side of the City. It includes two new stations in east Edinburgh, one with an attached park and ride car park, and a station serving Edinburgh Park, operational from Christmas 2003. Both schemes were promoted and managed by the Council, with the Crossrail project receiving a National Transport Award.

6.3.16 The Council is currently working with Network Rail, the Strategic Rail Authority and the Scottish Executive on a major redevelopment project for Waverley Station. This is likely to involve track works to increase capacity and improved access and will be implemented over the next few years.

6.3.17 Similarly, a major interchange project is being planned for Haymarket Station. The first phase of this involving the removal of the left turn for vehicles from Dalry Road to Haymarket Terrace, improved pedestrian facilities at this location and relocation of the bus stops serving the station will be implemented during 2004. Development of the next phases of work will follow.

6.3.18 The Council is committed to working in partnership with Train Operating Companies (TOCs), Network Rail and the Strategic Rail Authority to deliver rail projects. Further projects which will be implemented through such partnership working are the introduction of CCTV with help points and improved customer information at Dalmeny, Kingsknowe, Wester Hailes, Curriehill and a number of other stations throughout the SESTRAN area, as well as a number of station car park extensions. Platform extensions, due to be in place by the end of 2004 will mean an increase in capacity for Fife, Bathgate and Dunblane routes with increased peak hour seating capacity on the Glasgow - Edinburgh route coming into operation prior to that date.



Scotrail Intercity services

Travel by Tram

6.3.19 The Council is committed to implementing a tram system to ensure a fully integrated transport system operates in the city. The tram is fast, comfortable and clean, as well as smooth running and energy and space efficient. Modern trams are relatively quieter than other forms of transport, as they are electrically powered. They are safe and secure, accessible to all and reliable. A high quality tram system would be

designed to fit the unique character of the capital city. A parallel workstream will ensure that the opportunities presented by the introduction of tram are reflected in the design of the urban realm through which the tram system will pass. This design will in effect ensure a ‘wall to wall’ redesign of the public realm to ensure the tram is fully integrated within the wider streetscape.

- 6.3.20 From experience in Europe and other areas in the UK it is evident that trams can be relatively successful in persuading car users to switch to this form of transport by serving local journeys in a fast and reliable way with little environmental impact. Again, from experience elsewhere in Europe, a high quality tram system can become an attraction in itself and so not only benefit the city through providing another layer in an integrated, sustainable transport system but also adding to the overall quality and image of the city. An extension to the proposed One-Ticket system will allow passengers to opt between buses, trams and trains as their preferred methods of travel. In terms of integration with other transport modes, the tram project will facilitate the role of Haymarket as a key transport interchange catering for tram, rail, bus and taxi. There are three tram lines proposed for the city.
- 6.3.21 Tram Line 1 is being developed to provide a high quality transport service for the north of Edinburgh to serve residents, existing and new businesses and developments planned in Leith, Newhaven and Granton. The line will run from the city centre and along Leith Walk, with key stops at Ocean Terminal and Waterfront.
- 6.3.22 Line 2 will serve residents and businesses in the west of Edinburgh, including Gyle, the new Royal Bank of Scotland headquarters at Gogarburn, Edinburgh Airport and Newbridge. Line 3 will link the city centre and the new Royal Infirmary and go on to serve the south east of Edinburgh.
- 6.3.23 The Council has secured a significant proportion of the necessary finance to cover the design of the three tram lines, and construction of at least one and probably two routes and is working towards securing the remaining funding which will ensure implementation of the 3 lines. It is intended that trams on lines 1 and 2, the north and west lines, will start operating in 2009.
- 6.3.24 While the new tram services will in future provide for significant numbers of public transport journeys, the bus will continue, even in the long term, to be the most important mode, catering for the majority of public transport journeys made. Both trams and buses operate most efficiently when they are protected from general traffic congestion, so the Council will seek to increase the provision of public transport priority. The Council will, however, expect bus operators to contribute to the cost of such schemes, given the cost savings and increased revenues operators are likely to experience as a result of their introduction.

Travel by Taxi

- 6.3.25 Taxis are an important component of the public transport system, particularly for local access to long-distance public transport trips, and for use by people with disabilities. As the taxi licensing authority, the Council requires all taxis to be fully accessible and at present there are 1,260 such vehicles operating in the City. By providing a presence at the major bus and rail interchanges they are not only providing ‘the missing link’ in many journeys such as long distance travel to home, but are also ensuring an integrated transport system is possible without access to a private car being essential. Wherever possible, taxis will be permitted to operate in bus lanes. It is essential however, if taxis are to make their full contribution to the public transport system and ensure easy interchange between modes of travel, that there is a ready supply available at key termini such as Waverley Station and Edinburgh Airport.

Park and Ride

6.3.26 The Council sees Park and Ride as an important component in reducing the attractiveness of the car as people’s mode of choice for trips into the city centre. There is currently one Park and Ride site operating in Edinburgh, at Newcraighall which provides integration with a rail link into the city centre, with another important site at Ferrytoll in Fife. Four other sites are proposed for locations on the city edge covering the main radial routes into Edinburgh. These will link to the city centre by bus priority corridors, or by rail (and, in the future, tram) services.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT PROVISION UNDER THE PREFERRED STRATEGY

6.3.27 Implementation of congestion charging would allow the funding of significant bus service network improvement in Edinburgh and on routes linking Edinburgh with the wider SESTRAN area. It is estimated that around £80 million would be available for spending on bus priority, interchange, information and ticketing, bus service and fare initiatives along with security improvements on public transport under the Preferred Strategy in Edinburgh with an additional £105 million for the rest of the SESTRAN area. A further £17 million would be available for community and accessible transport. Without Congestion Charging, the Council will, subject to available funding, continue to support bus services that fulfil a social need, where such need is not provided for by commercial operation.

SOCIAL INCLUSION AUDIT

6.3.28 The public transport strategy makes a considerable contribution to ensuring social inclusion in a wide variety of ways, examples are as follows. The provision of new bus and tram services along with the continual revenue support of non-commercial but socially necessary bus services are key components of this strategy and all operate to widen choice and opportunity of travel. Initiatives such as providing bus boarders and keeping bus stops clear of parked cars are being carried out under the Access to Growth Areas award and whilst being small scale, they are no less significant in contributing to a socially inclusive transport system. Other examples are the provision of improved transport interchanges and the requirement for all taxis in the city to be fully accessible.

POLICIES

- PT1 The Council, in partnership with transport providers, will seek the operation of an integrated public transport network for Edinburgh. To this end, the Council will seek to improve facilities for passengers transferring between services (including those operated by different modes) at designated interchange points, and ensure that the benefits of priority are shared between all modes of public transport wherever possible.
- PT2 The Council will work with neighbouring local authorities to develop new bus routes including interchange facilities and park and ride facilities.
- PT3 The Council, through the planning process, will safeguard appropriate sites and alignments for public transport infrastructure.
- PT4 The Council will work with partners and external agencies to introduce a tram system to serve the City of Edinburgh.
- PT5 The Council will introduce measures to provide bus priority including bus lanes, selective vehicle detection, queue management systems and other priority initiatives where appropriate, to ensure travel by bus is as convenient, rapid and reliable as possible.

- PT6 When carrying out traffic management and road maintenance, there will be a presumption in favour of including measures to favour buses and their passengers, including:
- Bus boarders;
 - Bus shelters;
 - Bus stop clearway markings;
 - Widened footways, dropped kerbs, additional formal and informal crossing points to get to stops, and improved surfacing of roads and footways;
 - Bus lanes where necessary;
 - Selective vehicle detection at any new or modified traffic signals including pedestrian and/or cycle crossings to give trams and buses priority at signals; and
 - Real Time Information facilities at bus stops on key transport corridors.
- PT7 There will be a presumption against bus lay-bys except on high-speed rural roads or where bus layover occurs.
- PT8 The Council will, subject to funding availability, support bus services not provided commercially to ensure a comprehensive and convenient public transport network and will work with bus operators and neighbouring authorities to improve frequencies across the network.
- PT9 The Council believes that an increase in off-bus ticketing will reduce boarding delays to bus and other road users, and so will encourage operators to expand the range of tickets which can be bought before boarding buses. It will also work with operators to introduce fare initiatives across the network.
- PT10 The Council will seek to ensure the delivery of multi-modal, multi-operator public transport tickets at attractive prices. It will work with operators and other SESTRAN local authorities to achieve this.
- PT11 Use of bus lanes will continue to be reserved for buses, taxis, cycles and emergency vehicles only.
- PT12 The Council, through the planning process, will seek to maximise the potential for developer contributions towards the cost of public transport infrastructure and service support.
- PT13 In partnership with the operators, the Council will seek to:
- Limit bus service changes to take place on a maximum number of change dates per year (possibly four) to reduce uncertainty for passengers;
 - Ensure that operators contribute financially to the provision of bus priority measures and other infrastructure, since they will benefit directly from these in terms of reduced costs and increased revenues;
 - Enhance Customer Care Training for all bus drivers to improve the quality of service to passengers, increase confidence among vulnerable passengers and reduce accidents; including disability awareness training as a matter of course;
 - Provide a fully accessible and environmentally friendly bus fleet ahead of legislative requirements; and
 - Encourage marketing of services targeted at persuading regular car commuters to shift use to public transport.

- PT14 The Council will work in partnership to promote new rail schemes where appropriate.
- PT15 The Council will work with public transport operators to provide equipment to ensure security for passengers and staff whilst using public transport.

ACTION PLAN

Base Strategy

Bus and Transport Interchanges

In the short to medium term, the Council will:

- PTP1 Implement the Quality Bus Corridor (QBC) (A7, A701 and A199) scheme, including the provision of Public Transport Interchange points.
- PTP2 Implement bus priority measures on the A702 corridor.
- PTP3 Implement the Access to Growth Areas package funded by the Public Transport Fund award for 2003 - 2006.
- PTP4 Implement the West Edinburgh Busway measures.
- PTP5 Implement Real Time Information on the QBC and expand this, with operator contributions, to additional corridors.
- PTP6 Bid to the Scottish Executive for funds to “Kick Start” a number of new bus routes that have the potential to become profitable after a limited period of public subsidy.
- PTP7 Publish a Bus Service Information Strategy that will include the Council’s minimum standards of bus service information provision within Edinburgh.
- PTP8 Continue to provide information to the Traveline Scotland service.
- PTP9 Publish a Bus Friendly Design Guide to ensure a consistent standard of infrastructure provision.
- PTP10 Implement the Council’s Central Edinburgh Traffic Management measures, including the removal of general traffic westbound in Princes Street, as modified after consideration of the Reporter’s recommendations.
- PTP11 Subject to available funding, extend selective vehicle detection and priority at all traffic signals in the city where this would benefit bus services.
- PTP12 Upgrade bus stops in the city in terms of parking control, passenger amenity, security and accessibility. This will require a prioritisation process, with heavily used stops receiving highest priority. Funding is currently available for 100 stops.
- PTP13 Identify all bus stops where parking obstructs bus passengers seeking to board or alight buses, at any time of day. Introduce appropriate bus stop clearways, which may be associated with short bus boarders, so that passengers can reach the bus unimpeded.
- PTP14 In co-operation with Lothian and Borders Police, develop and implement bus lane camera enforcement.
- PTP15 Review the hours of operation of bus lanes and other bus priority measures in order to rationalise arrangements wherever possible, in order to aid understanding and enforcement and ensure that priority is being provided when it is required.
- PTP16 Seek to expand the range of, and the access to, multi-modal, multi-operator, multi-journey tickets available in the SESTRAN area, through participation in the One-Ticket company.

PTP17 Complete the programme of major interchange improvements in the City Centre to facilitate convenient and easy transfer between transport modes.

Park and ride

PTP18 Implement bus-based Park and Ride arrangements at Straiton/Burdiehouse, Ingliston and Hermiston.

Tram

PTP19 Implement Lines 1 and 2, the north and west Edinburgh tram lines, by 2009.

PTP20 Complete the Parliamentary Bill procedure for the South East Edinburgh tram line (Line 3).

PTP21 Work with operators to ensure that trams and buses are integrated in terms of fares, ticketing and service patterns.

Rail and Regional Links

PTP22 Continue to participate actively in the planning process for the redevelopment of Waverley Station and Haymarket Station and secure developer contributions wherever appropriate.

PTP23 Continue to work with Midlothian and Scottish Borders Councils to promote the Parliamentary Bill procedure for the Borders Railway and secure opening of the route for services.

PTP24 Work with its SESTRAN partners to develop and prioritise other rail and tram schemes across the region, and to take advantage of funding opportunities as these arise, to deliver these projects.

PTP25 Work with the Scottish Executive, the rail industry and SESTRAN partners as appropriate to ensure that the Bathgate-Airdrie maximises benefits for rail users travelling to and from Edinburgh.

PTP26 Work with the Scottish Executive, the rail industry and Edinburgh Airport on the implementation of a rail link to the airport to ensure maximum benefits for the travelling public.

Taxi

PTP27 Explore the potential of demand responsive services to serve situations of low demand, both in terms of time and location. This will take the form of a review of the results of current (2003) Department for Transport work on this topic, followed by additional work, specific to Edinburgh, if the national work appears promising.

Preferred Strategy

In addition to the actions listed in the Base Strategy, under the Preferred Strategy the Council would deliver the following improvements:

Medium Term

PTP28 Supplement the existing bus service network in terms of frequency and coverage in order to address existing unmet demand and provide better alternatives to car use.

PTP29 Evaluate the use of congestion charging revenue to take initiatives on public transport fares in line with the objectives of the Local Transport Strategy.

PTP30 In partnership with the operators, extend bus priority to remaining, appropriate, parts of the network.

- PTP31 Complete the bus stop improvement programme.
- PTP32 Increase the number of Public Transport Interchange points in the city.
- PTP33 Monitor usage and review the potential for further bus-based park and ride sites, and for expanding those sites already delivered.
- PTP34 Seek to achieve integrated timetabling between bus and other public transport modes, including tram.
- PTP35 Deliver Tram Line 3 (by 2012), and possibly extensions outwith Edinburgh to nearby centres, in collaboration with SESTRAN partners.
- PTP36 In partnership with other SESTRAN local authorities and other appropriate bodies, implement proposals for better regional rail links and services to and through Edinburgh.