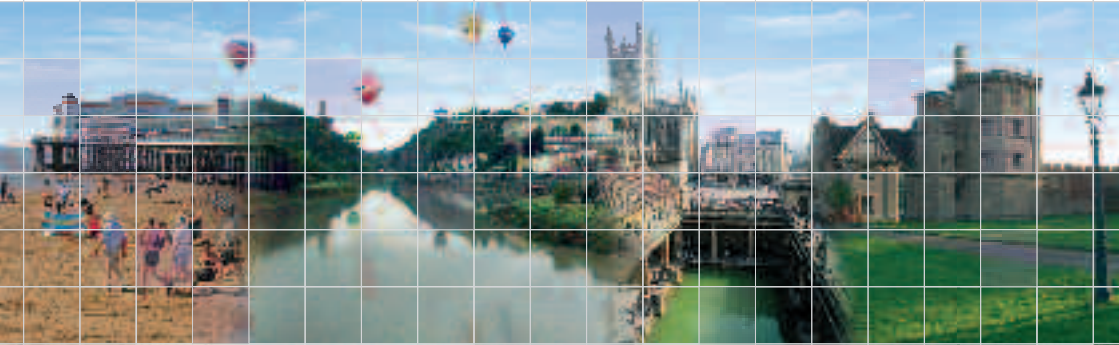




Joint Local Transport Plan Consultation



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Accessibility



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BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET



North
Somerset
COUNCIL

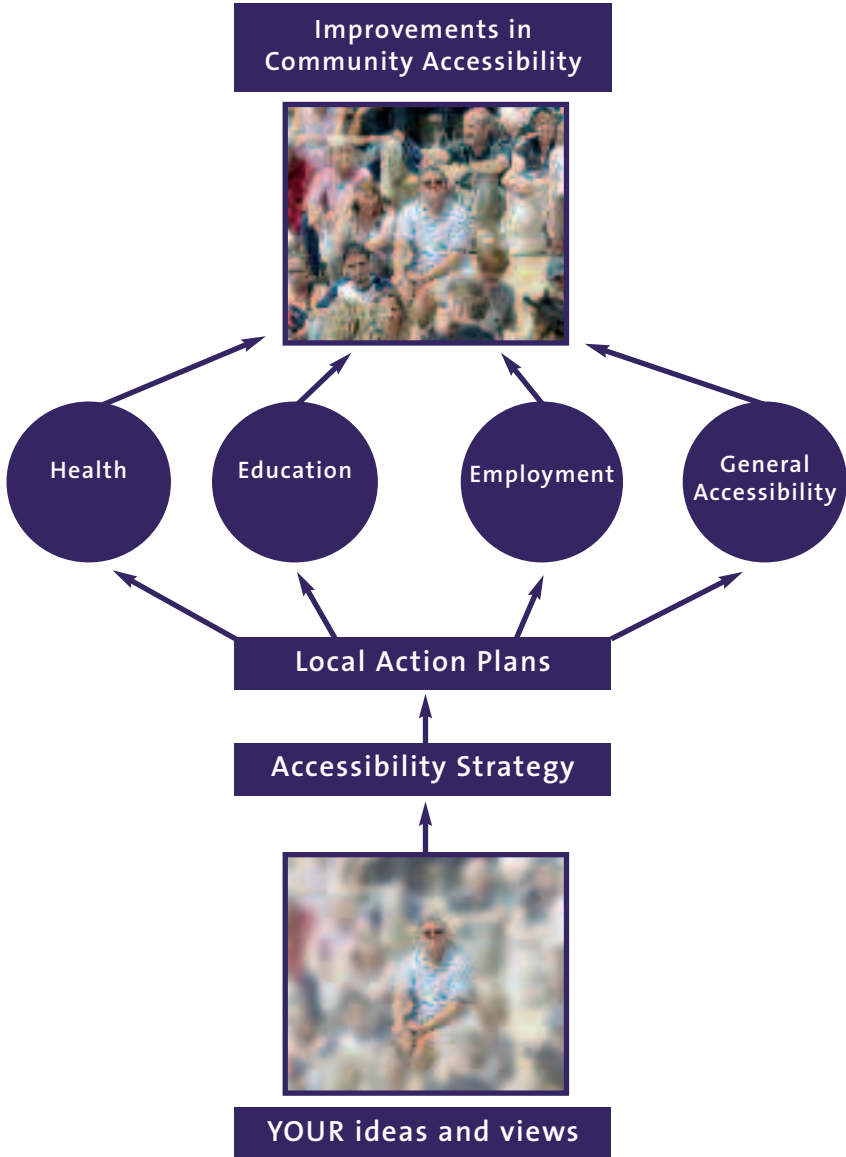


November 2005

Accessibility Strategy - Consultation

Why you should be reading this?

Look at the diagram below. Your involvement will help shape the Accessibility Strategy, its Action Plans and the improvements in community accessibility that result.



Accessibility planning is all about tackling the problems of getting around. Making it easier to get to work, to college to the local hospital or health centre. It is especially important for those in disadvantaged groups or areas.

Accessibility issues arise for many groups. People without the use of a car, people on low incomes, people living in isolated areas, older people, younger people and people with disabilities all have different transport needs. Not meeting these needs can significantly impact on their quality of life.

Accessibility is at the heart of all transport provision. Improved accessibility to public transport is crucial in helping to reduce car

traffic and the high dependence on car use. In turn this will reduce the impact of congestion, improve air quality and road safety.

This is why accessibility is a key part of the provisional Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP) July 2005. Bringing together Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol City, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Councils the JLTP sets out our transport plans for the next five years (2006 – 2011) and our vision for the next 20 – 30 years.

This is why we want you to get involved. You may have already done so but we need your continued involvement. You may be an individual or represent a group or organisation but accessibility will affect you in some

Box A - Partnership Working

- Accessibility Forum, November 2004, with health, education and employment sectors.
- Links formed with existing groups concerned with transport including Pathfinder Groups, Learning Difficulties Partnerships, Job Centre Plus, Connexions and the Hartcliffe and Withywood Partnership.
- Strategic level contacts established with a wide range of bodies including Local Strategic Partnerships, 16-19 Transport Partnerships and the Rural Transport Partnership.
- Strategy Group set up with representatives from health, secondary and further education, training and employment sectors across the JLTP area.

way or another. Please read this draft strategy. Watch out for key questions throughout and fill in the questionnaire.

To help you the strategy is divided into four sections:

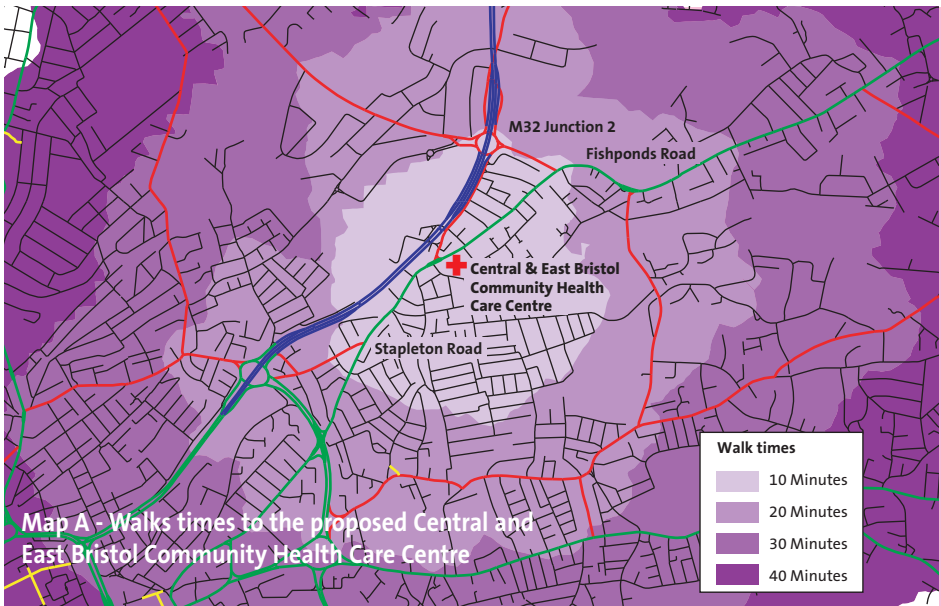
- Problems and Needs
- Objectives, Priorities and Targets
- Action Plans
- Challenging Ideas

Problems and Needs

We've been talking to individuals, groups and organisations and building partnerships to find out what their needs are and what they think are problems for people getting around. Box A outlines what's been going on.

We have also been doing a great deal of work on mapping. This uses the Government's new Accession mapping software. It enables plots to be made showing access to hospitals, education facilities, General Practitioners and employment centres for the whole population and by various sub groups. It helps us to identify areas where there are problems accessing these key services. Map A for example shows both how easy and difficult it will be for some people to walk to a new community health centre.

From talking to interested groups and individuals, partnership working and mapping we have identified the following problems and needs (Box B). These form the



heart of the Accessibility Strategy and guide the later sections on our proposed objectives, priorities and action plans.

Box B - Problems and needs

- Improve access to hospitals and health centres for staff, patients and visitors and especially from rural areas.
- Poor public transport information. Need to improve quality, format and availability of information especially for people with learning difficulties. People do not know what information is out there or how to use it.
- Poor public transport access for workers to major employment sites. Problems with shift working and limited off peak services.
- Limited public transport access for passengers and staff to Bristol International Airport and especially from rural areas.
- Transport links to further education colleges need to be improved.

Objectives, Priorities and Targets

You've told us about a wide range of problems and issues and we've shaped our objectives and priorities around them. They are:

Objective One: Improve accessibility across the Joint Local Transport Plan area by reducing congestion and improving public transport and facilities for cycling and walking.

Objective Two: Improve access to key services and facilities, particularly for people who experience mobility constraints. These services will include health, education and employment.

Objective Three: Extend the operation of accessibility planning into the planning and location of all future land use developments and facilities.

Working with our partners and ideas put forward in the Provisional Joint Local Transport Plan we have drawn up a list of potential **priorities** for action. They are:

Q. Are there any problems and needs we've missed?

Access to Health Facilities

Access to Further Education

Access to Work

General Accessibility/ Better Information

We are looking at setting targets, based on the Government's Mandatory Local Transport Plan Indicators for accessibility, to help drive forward these priorities. The targets are:

LTP1a - Improve accessibility for all residents to educational services.

LTP1b - Improve accessibility for all residents to health services.

LTP1c - Improve accessibility for all residents to employment.

Q. Do you agree with our objectives and priorities? Have we missed any?

Action Plans – achieving our objectives

Based on the list of problems and issues, objectives and priorities identified above we have drawn up a potential list of Action Plans for tackling accessibility. This is by no means a final list but we have identified seven key Action Plans (Box C) we hope to start implementing from April 2006.

These Action Plans will take a variety of forms. They will guide and target many of the local interventions the four Councils and our partners undertake. They will provide a sound information based approach to tackling accessibility. Active monitoring will be used to ensure measures are performing and identify where more action is needed.

Within the Action Plans work will be undertaken to assess the nature, severity and extent of each problem, the ease of resolving them and their contribution to meeting accessibility targets. This work is essential because funding is likely to be limited and demonstrating value for money will be important in deciding on actions.



Box C - Action Plans

Bristol Health Service Plan

Assess the impact on staff, patients and visitors of the Bristol Health Service Plan proposals for developing a number of community hospitals. Identify and implement measures for improving accessibility.

Royal United Hospital, Bath

Improved public transport services to the RUH are needed. Focus on drop off points, better services from Keynsham and Chew Magna and for staff living in North Bristol particularly out of office hours.

Bristol Royal Infirmary

Identify and implement improvements to public transport and better links to Bristol Royal Infirmary especially from rural areas but also within the site and to the bus station, Bristol Temple Meads and park and ride.

Public Transport Information improvement package

Improve quality, format and availability of information especially for people with learning difficulties.

Aztec West, Almondsbury and Eagleswood business parks, Cribbs Causeway and Avonmouth.

Identify and implement public transport improvements for workers to access major employment sites. Include proposals for shift working and off peak services.

Bristol International Airport

Identify and implement public transport improvements for passengers and staff to Bristol International Airport. Focus on access from South Bristol and North Somerset villages, shift working and off peak services and use of demand responsive services.

Further Education colleges

Consider solutions to improve public transport access from rural areas of Bath and North East Somerset and North Somerset to a range of colleges. Investigate re timing services to suit course times, flexible bus routes and community transport.

As other accessibility issues and problems emerge we will develop additional Action Plans. Some ideas for future ones are in Box D.

Funding is going to be very important. Resources will be tight. In preparing Action Plans we will be looking at ways to link into and attract other sources of funding. This may well include funding that your group or organisation currently spends on transport.

In developing Action Plans we will seek to involve local community and interest groups wherever possible. We will work on the principle that no actions are worth putting in place without involving people and organisations throughout the process.



Box D - Future Action Plan Ideas

- Interchanges – improved facilities and linked bus/rail/community transport services.
- Cross city bus routes – opening up new travel opportunities.
- Access to cultural and recreational facilities.
- Community transport.
- Improved transport for smaller towns and villages to local facilities.
- Investigate combining the planning and funding of public transport, Social Services, Education and Health Transport Services.

Q. Do you agree with the list of Action Plans? Use the questionnaire to select the three which you think are most important. Have we missed any?

Challenging Ideas

We've set out a wide range of Action Plan proposals for tackling accessibility but are we going far enough? Do we need a more challenging approach, more radical and far reaching ideas? This is your opportunity to make suggestions. Below (Box E) are some ideas to think about.

Some ideas may not be practical due to funding issues or possible under current legislation. We do, however, need to look at and plan ahead and just because something is unachievable now doesn't mean it will not be in the future.

Box E - Challenging Ideas

- Fundamental review of the existing bus network. Direct services to best match demand and accessibility needs rather than historical bus routes.
- Four Councils come together to jointly fund and organise evening and weekend bus services. Avoid duplication of services and link into reviewed bus network as above.
- Unified and simplified ticketing system for buses and trains.
- Linked network of community transport services across the whole of the Joint Local Transport Plan area.

Q. How do you feel about these challenging ideas? Do you have any other ideas?

What happens next?

Fill in the questionnaire and return by 16 December 2005.

Joint Local Transport Plan Forum with Accessibility Workshop 30 November 2005.

Revisions and changes to Accessibility Strategy, November 2005 to January 2006.

Final Accessibility Strategy submitted with Joint Local Transport Plan, March 2006.

And finally...

Thank you for taking the time to read this document. Please fill in the questionnaire and return it to the Freepost address provided. The Accessibility Strategy has been and will continue to be shaped by your views and concerns. We need your support and enthusiasm.