

SESTRAN EQUALITIES FORUM
FRIDAY 14TH AUGUST 2015, 10.00AM
SESTRAN OFFICES, CLAREMONT HOUSE, EDINBURGH, EH7 4LB

Tea and coffee available from 9.30am

AGENDA

1. Introduction
2. Thistle card update and proposals
3. Mobility Scooters update
4. Disability Audit Reston/East Linton Station Consultation
5. Waverley/Haymarket/ Edinburgh Gateway
6. Crag and Enable (stop the bus) campaign
7. AOCB
8. Next meeting

EQUALITIES FORUM
SESTRAN, CLAREMONT HOUSE, EDINBURGH
10AM FRIDAY 13th February

Present

Alastair Short (Chair)	SEStran
John Ballantine	SATA
Jane Findlay	Fife Council
John Moore	LCTS
Ken Reid	East Lothian Access Panel
Alan Rees	SATA
Gordon Mungall	West Lothian Access Committee
Moira Mungall	West Lothian Access Committee
Dennis Wilson	Edinburgh Access Panel
Andrew Hutt	SEStran
Lisa Freeman	SEStran
Fern Wallingford	SEStran

Apologies

David Griffiths	ECAS
Ekta Marwaha	ELREC
Alex Macaulay	SEStran
Kenny Selbie	West Lothian
Terry Barlow	Stirling Access Panel
Lesley Crozier	Midlothian

Ref		Actions
1	Introduction, Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising	
	<p>Mr Short welcomed the group and conducted round table introductions. Apologies noted as above.</p> <p>31/10/14 Item 1 Traveline</p> <p>Mr Short summarised issues regarding Traveline and the app, particularly in Galashiels. Mrs Freeman apologized as she did not realise that the action point regarding contacting Traveline was her responsibility. She noted that Traveline is invited to the forum; however she will follow up with John Elliot to be sure that they are aware. Mr Short said that a conversation did take place just after the last meeting, and that Traveline</p>	Mrs Freeman

	<p>recognize that there is a problem in the Galashiels area – it is a network/phone communication problem.</p> <p>31/10/14 Item 1 Trams Validation As indicated in the previous minutes, Mr Short contacted Edinburgh Trams and received a response stating that they will validate tickets on board. Mr Reid advised that he has travelled twice and they were quite happy to validate on board, indicating that training has been implemented.</p> <p>31/10/14 Item 4.1 City of Edinburgh Council, Taxi Card Scheme Budget Proposal Mr Griffiths, who Mr Short notes is unable to attend, circulated the information to everybody. Some bodies have made comment on it.</p> <p>Mr Rees asked whether SEStran has a role over and above surveying the situation, for example bringing councils together to discuss issues with the proposed Taxi Card scheme. Mr Short responded that SEStran conducted a study in to taxi card scheme throughout the SEStran area, and the findings were so divergent that councils would have to spend a lot of money to conform; asking councils to do this would be a big step.</p> <p>Mr Rees raised the fact that 12 local authorities within the Strathclyde area have a single scheme, while the rest of Scotland has a variety of taxi and rail schemes. He would like SEStran to raise this with the Scottish Government. Mr Short acknowledged that further investigation in to various councils’ schemes is necessary. Mr Hutt is to conduct a study to gain an overview of these. Mr Short also suggests that this remain an agenda point for further discussion in future meetings.</p> <p>31/10/14 Item 4.3 SEStran Bus forum – Displaying wheelchair spaces Mr Short said that he will discuss the potential to display vacant/occupied status for wheelchair spaces on buses at the next Bus Forum on Friday 20th February.</p>	<p>Mr Hutt Mr Short</p> <p>Mr Short</p>
2	Thistle Card Update	
	<p>Mr Short gave an update on Thistle Card distribution over the last year or so. He says that distribution has dropped considerably, and that it is reaching saturation point. There is a lot more distribution to elderly care, healthcare and disability groups rather than bus companies, councils and libraries. He says that Lothian buses will be putting stickers on the backs of seven hundred buses around the city, so it will be well publicized over the next year. Mr Short said that SEStran has ordered 5,000 more cards in anticipation of more interest. This will bring it to a total of 50,000 cards distributed eventually.</p>	

	Mr Short summarised various similar schemes across the country: Tactran and SWestrans have launched similar schemes, and HITRANS will launch theirs soon. Strathclyde have their own version of the Thistle Card, while Nestrans is looking in to it. Mr Short hopes that the Thistle Card will eventually become a nationally recognized product.	
3	Mobility Scooters	
	<p>Mr Hutt compiled a report, which was provided to members via email and printouts, regarding various bus and rail companies' policies regarding mobility Scooters on board. He called the group's attention to Point 3 as a general overview regarding bus and rail service guidelines. He notes that express services in London are the strictest, and can ask for Mobility Scooters to be condensed. Mr Hutt clarified that the weight restrictions provided in the document include the user. Scooters are usually around 65 kilograms, which allows for a lot of leeway in user weight to reach the 300 kilogram limit.</p> <p>He noted that Lothian Buses explicitly state on their website that they do <u>not</u> accept mobility scooters on buses; however Trond Haugen has seen them on board. Mr Haugen and Mr Hutt will ask for clarification on this at the upcoming Bus Forum. Mr Reid adds that Prentis, too, explicitly forbids mobility scooters, however his friend has a Prentis issued permit. He praised Mr Hutt's document for consolidating companies' published statements, but notes that there may be opportunities for flexibility.</p> <p>Mr Hutt says that, once approved by the Board at the end of March, this document will be published on the SEStran website so that potential scooter customers can check specifications before purchase. He will also circulate it to the group when approved.</p> <p>Mr Hutt will alert bus companies to the publication and distribution of this document at the Bus Forum. He will also make sure that this is conveyed at the next Rail Forum (10 April).</p> <p>Mr Mungall will pass this document on to SDEF (Scottish Disability Equality Forum), once approved by the Board.</p>	<p>Mr Hutt / Mr Haugen</p> <p>Mr Hutt</p> <p>Mr Hutt</p> <p>Mr Mungall</p>
4	SEStran Refreshed RTS	
	<p>Mr Short explained that the SEStran Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) has been refreshed and brought up to date over the past year. It is under consultation until March 3, so he invites the group to view it on the SEStran website and to submit any comments. (Links to Consultation Draft and Appendices)</p> <p>Mr Short circulated a version of the SEStran Equalities Outcome Report,</p>	

	<p>which has been altered slightly to refer to the updated RTS.</p> <p>Mr Short acknowledged that the removal of capital funding is a prominent feature of the report; an element that is also coming through in the RTS. He explained that the policies that this document is based upon have not changed - rather the way in which SEStran implements the policies has changed.</p> <p>Mr Moore noted that public bodies and local authorities are now combining matter of equalities with rights, and creating an Equalities and Rights Impact Assessment (EIRA), foregrounding Human Rights. Mrs Findlay will provide SEStran with a copy of Fife Council's Equalities and Human Rights Impact Assessment for reference.</p> <p>Mr Reid stressed the importance of <i>mitigating</i> disadvantages in strategies and assessments, rather than simply acknowledging them. Mr Moore responded that there is a column in an EIRA for "Mitigating Actions" to outline action being taken.</p>	<p>Mrs Findlay</p>
5	Emergency Access, Claremont House	
	<p>Mr Short said that SEStran had a Fire Risk Assessment carried out recently at Claremont House. One area of concern was how the exit would be managed in case of emergency evacuation during an Equalities Forum meeting.</p> <p>Mrs Freeman explained that the closest fire exit is to the right upon exiting the Forth meeting room. She checked and confirmed that there is a ramp outside this exit.</p> <p>Mr Short suggested a "buddy" system in case of emergency, but the group indicated that this would not be necessary, and probably not feasible due to different forum members and office staff on any given day. It was decided that the meeting chair would organize assistance for those needing it, if and when an emergency situation arose.</p> <p>Mr Short explained that Claremont House meets all requirements, although there is no visual indicator when an alarm sounds. Mrs Freeman suggested that the Office Manager look in to this.</p> <p>The fire alarm was tested during the meeting, and the group was concerned by how quiet it was from the Forth Room with the door closed. It may be inaudible if a presentation or DVD was playing. This concern will be raised with the Office Manager.</p>	<p>Ms Wallingford to pass on to Office Manager</p>

6.	Waverly Haymarket Update	
	<p>Mr Ballantine said that there was a very low key Waverly access meeting that took place on Monday 9th February. The impression he got from Network Rail was that they are doing their best and that it would have to suffice. Mr Wilson agreed with this impression.</p> <p>Mr Ballantine said that his biggest issue is the number of failed Passenger Assists at Waverly Station, which he believes is due to the large number of different entrances. He said that Abellio Scotrail claim that they will be able to use better technology. Mr Wilson explained that, while there are around 121 CCTV cameras in the station, Network Rail was unreceptive to the suggestion that these could be used near call points to help coordinate Passenger Assists, due to difficulty and cost. He said that CCTV monitors are not actively observed, but believes that they could be used in conjunction with the Passenger Assist call buttons to improve service.</p> <p>Mr Ballantine pointed out that staff are very willing to help, but oftentimes the information is not conveyed to them correctly or timely. He added that all the new stations on the Borders railway are unmanned, so those with disabilities are reliant on the onboard staff. Mrs Mungall said that not all coaches are staffed, and she has often been provided with a taxi instead.</p> <p>Mr Wilson pointed out that the taxi rank in Market Street has been moved to the West, forcing passengers to walk the entire length of the rank to the first vehicle. Mr Reid said that the approach to Waverly Station from Calton Road is difficult with a cane, and would be difficult with a frame or wheelchair. Mr Wilson believes that this whole area is being worked on by the city council at present.</p> <p>Mr Ballantine added that Network Rail are not concerned with matters outside of the station boundary, and similarly passenger assistance requests cannot work outside the boundary, which leaves passengers dependent upon the local council. He stresses that Network Rail and the Council need to work together for this reason.</p> <p>Mr Short said that this issue should be raised at the next Rail Forum, and with Edinburgh City Council.</p> <p>Mr Short informed the group that there is going to be an invited Stakeholder Event for Abellio held at the Scotsman Hotel on the 13th of March. Mr Short will pass on the names of those interested to Mr Haugen to try and secure invites. Mr Ballantine and Mr Reid expressed interest.</p>	<p>Mr Short</p> <p>Mr Short and Mr Haugen</p>

7.	AOCB	
	<p>Mr Wilson raised an earlier suggestion to try to expand the number of disability groups attending the forum. He questioned whether the regular attendees of the Equalities Forum could be seen to represent disability groups from Edinburgh, Lothian and the Borders. Mrs Freeman suggested circulating the distribution list to members for alteration and addition. Ms Wallingford will do so next week.</p> <p>Mr Moore also suggested that the 10am start time may hinder more from attending.</p>	Ms Wallingford
8.	Next meeting	
	The next meeting of the Equalities Forum is scheduled for Friday 8 th May, 10am at Claremont House	

SEStran Thistle Assistance Cards: Distribution Overview

Statistics applicable to 3 August 2015

Statistics displayed as text

Table 1: Figures summarising total number of cards distributed from the SEStran office and the costs of this each financial year

Financial Year	No. Of Cards Sent from SEStran Office	Postage and Courier Costs
2011-12	25413	£449.37
2012-13	6891	£354.04
2013-14	8352	£331.62
2014-15	1317	£97.24
2015-16 (current)	234	£21.82
Overall Totals:	42207	£1254.09

Table 2: Total number of cards sent to each sector for financial year 2011-2012

Sector	Quantity
Bus Companies Total	13510
Councils Total	4000
Disability Groups Total	4020
Healthcare Total	3740
Other Total	40
Personal Total	103
Grand Total	25413

Table 3: Total number of cards sent to each sector for financial year 2012-2013

Sector	Quantity
Bus Companies Total	1020
Councils Total	1020
Disability Groups Total	699
Elderly Care Total	132
Healthcare Total	1260
Libraries Total	110
Other Total	2220
Personal Total	430
Grand Total	6891

Table 4: Total number of cards sent to each sector for financial year 2013-2014

Sector	Quantity
Bus Companies Total	3100
Disability Groups Total	1040
Elderly Care Total	50
Healthcare Total	3500
Libraries Total	200

Other Total	0
Personal Total	444
Grand Total	8334

Table 4: Total number of cards sent to each sector for financial year 2014-2015 (current)

Sector	Quantity
Bus Companies	0
Disability Groups	530
Healthcare	300
Libraries	46
Elderly Care	100
Councils	0
Other	30
Personal	11
Grand Total	1317

Table 5: Total number of cards sent to each sector for financial year 2015-16 (current)

Sector	Quantity
Bus Companies	0
Disability Groups	50
Healthcare	44
Libraries	70
Elderly Care	10
Councils	50
Other	6
Personal	4
Grand Total	234

Taxi Card Scheme and Rail Concession Review

1 Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a useful factsheet that will advise users looking into the possibility of using a Taxi Card or rail concession scheme (appendix 5) in their local authority.

2 Introduction

- 2.1 In 2007 SEStran commissioned the consultant JMP to review the Taxi Card scheme across the SEStran area and a report was published in May 2008. The report noted that Taxi Card schemes within the SEStran area have developed as a result of local issues and demands. The variations that exist between them can be explained by differences in available budgets of each of the authorities and the geographical nature of each of the areas as well as a range of other factors including demographics and availability of finance (revenue budgets).
- 2.2 At the Equalities Forum on the 13th February 2015, members asked SEStran to review the Taxi Card and concessionary rail schemes in light of the City of Edinburgh Council looking for sponsorship in this scheme.

3 Taxi Card Scheme Comparison: SEStran Local Authorities

Local Authority	Journeys per Annum	Discount Applied	Taxicard Charge	Limitations
Clackmannanshire	312 (6 / week)	- 50% off up to £4 - £2 off fare over £4	£0	Start and End in Clackmannanshire
Edinburgh	104 (2 / week)	- £2 flat rate up to £5 - £2 +£ amount over £5	£0	None
Falkirk	312 (6 / week)	- £2 flat rate up to £4 - £2 off fare over £4	£0	Start and End in Falkirk
Fife	80	- 50% off up to £4 - £2 off fare over £4	£0	Start and End in Fife
Midlothian	104 (2 / week)	- £2 flat rate up to £4.50 - £2 +£ amount over £5	£0	None
West Lothian	104 (2 / week)	- Up to £3 off	£0	No Information
East Lothian	Exists. No information on website.			
Scottish Borders	No current Taxi Card Scheme in place			

- 3.1 Clackmannanshire and Falkirk Councils offer the greatest number of journeys per annum under the Taxi Card Scheme.
- 3.2 The discount applied is similar across all of the SEStran local authorities.

4 Conclusions

- 4.2 Appendix 5 offers an explanation of the rail concessions available in each local authority in the SEStran area.
- 4.3 It can be noted that the concessionary rail travel and Taxi Card schemes available are quite restrictive between different local authorities within the SEStran area and may benefit from a SEStran-wide scheme.

5 Appendix

5.1 Rail Concessions:

Edinburgh Council:

Edinburgh residents are offered free rail travel using the Taxicard between the following stations:

- Addiewell,
- Armadale,
- Blackridge,
- Bathgate,
- Breich,
- Brunstane,
- Curriehill,
- Dalmeny,
- Drem,
- Dunbar,
- Edinburgh Park,
- Fauldhouse,
- Haymarket,
- Kingsknowe,
- Kirknewton,
- Linlithgow,
- Livingston North,
- Livingston South,
- Longniddry,
- Musselburgh,
- Newcraighall,
- North Berwick,
- Prestonpans,
- Slateford,
- South Gyle,
- Uphall,
- Wallyford,
- Waverley,
- West Calder,
- Wester Hailes.

Taxi Card Holders **cannot** travel on a journey starting or ending at a station **not listed** above.

Fife Council:

Patrons can travel between any two Fife stations (showing their myfife card) for 50p for a single journey and £1 for a return journey. Patrons can travel any day of the week during off-peak hours (i.e. after 9.15am), and any time at the weekend.

If a journey continues out of Fife, a second ticket must be purchased at the full relevant fare (i.e. you require two tickets). However, you can only use a combination of tickets for your journey if the train calls at the station where you move from one ticket to another (e.g. this cannot be used on the direct train from Leuchars to Edinburgh as this service does not have another stop within Fife).

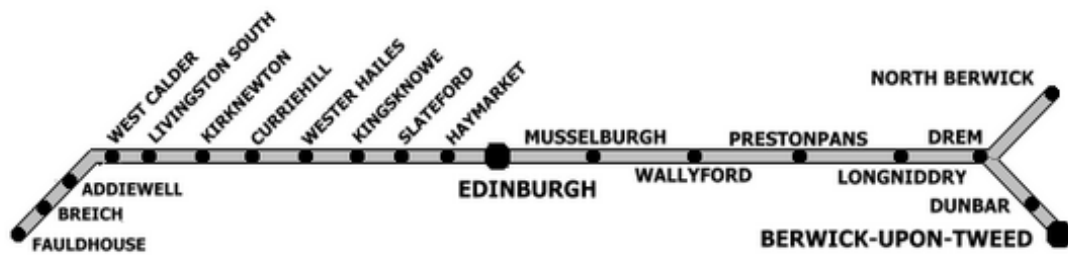
East Lothian Council:

Senior Citizens and disabled people can travel with 50% off single and return fares for the following tickets with the National Entitlement Card (NEC): Anytime Day, Off-Peak Sat single and Off-Peak Day Return.

Tickets must **not** be purchased at (i.e. origin): Addiewell, Bathgate, Breich, Fauldhouse, Kirknewton, Linlithgow, Livingston North and South, Uphall or West Calder.

The origin or destination on the ticket must always be an East Lothian station.

From May 18th (earliest) users will not be able to get a concession discount on peak fares (before 0915 and between 1643-1810) Mon-Fri.



West Lothian Council (using National Entitlement Card):

Using a NEC Card, West Lothian residents can have a discounted flat fare travel of £2 single or £4 return on off-peak train services operating between any two listed West Lothian Stations:

- Addiewell;
- Breich;
- Livingston North;
- Armadale;
- Fauldhouse;
- Livingston South;
- Bathgate;
- Kirknewton;
- Uphall;
- Blackridge;
- Linlithgow and;
- West Calder.

Using a NEC Card, West Lothian residents travelling with a £2 or £4 fare on off-peak train services can also travel between any of the stations listed above and the following stations:

- Airdrie;
- Curriehill;
- Holytown;
- Bellshill;
- Dalmeny;
- Kingsknowe;
- Brunstane;
- Drumgelloch;
- Larbert;
- Caldercruix;
- Edinburgh Haymarket;
- Newcraighall;
- Camelon;
- Edinburgh Park;
- Polmont;
- Carfin;
- Edinburgh Waverley;
- Shotts;
- Cleland;
- Falkirk Grahamston;
- Slateford;
- Coatbridge Sunnyside;
- Falkirk High;
- South Gyle;
- Coatdyke;
- Hartwood;
- Wester Hails and;
- Croy.

Holders of a West Lothian Taxicard can travel free between these stations.

Holders of a NEC and West Lothian Taxicard can travel with 50% off from a West Lothian station to one of the following:

- Bellgrove;
- Easterhouse;
- Musselburgh;
- Blairhill;
- Garowhill;
- North Berwick;
- Cambuslang;
- Glasgow Central;
- Prestonpans;
- Carntyre;
- Glasgow Queen Street;
- Uddingston;
- Drem High School;
- Shettleston;
- Wallyford;
- Dunbar and;
- Longniddry.

Falkirk Council:

As of April 2014, Falkirk Council withdrew from the Concessionary Rail Travel Scheme. This provided a £80,000 saving for the Council. The Scheme had previously provided 50% rail travel for pensioners and people with disabilities.

Midlothian Council:

There is currently no concessionary rail scheme at Midlothian Council.

Clackmannanshire Council:

There is currently no concessionary rail scheme at Clackmannanshire Council.

Scottish Borders Council:

There is currently no concessionary rail scheme at Scottish Borders Council.