Thistle Assistance

Your Travel Companion

Regio-Mob| 7th September 2022 | Jim Stewart

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South East of Scotland Transport Partnership

REGIO-MOB
Interreg Europe

European Union
European Regional Development Fund

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Thistle Assistance - What does it do?

- ✓ Supports people who need extra assistance now and again, particularly when travelling alone
- ✓ Creates more awareness and support in communities across Scotland – use of promotional material & advertising.
- ✓ Work more closely with transport companies & other partners.
- ✓ Part of Scottish Governments Accessible Travel Framework

thistle
ASSISTANCE
Travel With Confidence

Thistle Assistance - How does it do this?

Website acting as a Hub

Multi Media Awareness Campaign

Deployment & Measurement

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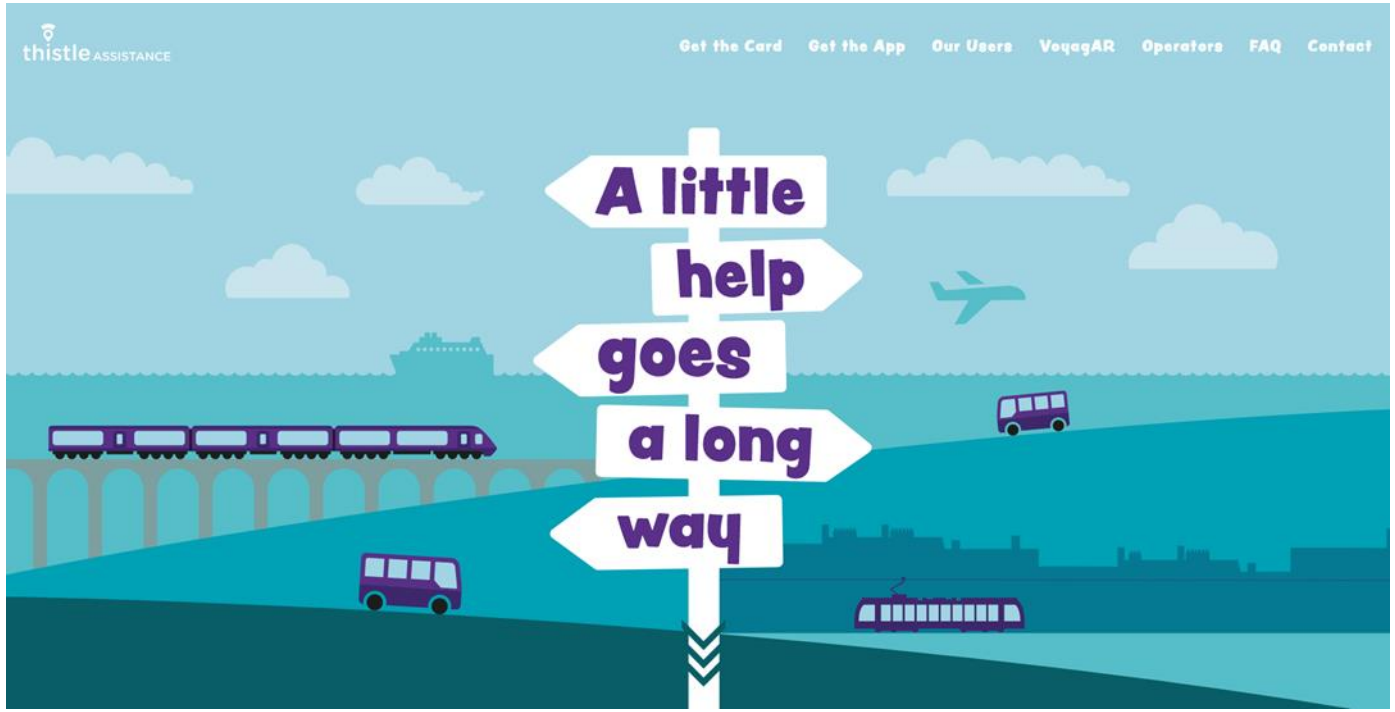
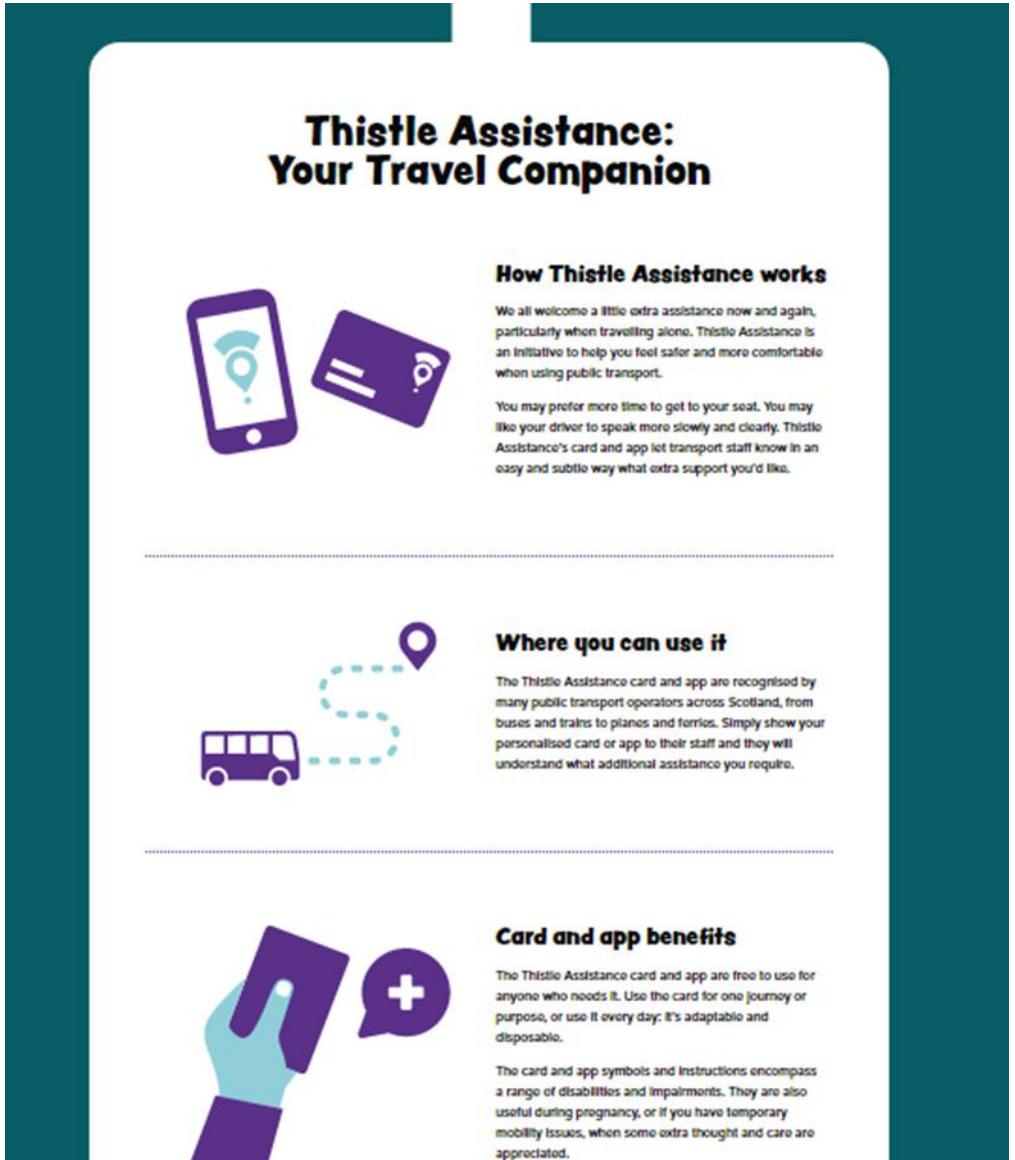


Introductory Video

A quick video overview of Thistle Assistance



Thistle Assistance: Your Travel Companion

How Thistle Assistance works

We all welcome a little extra assistance now and again, particularly when travelling alone. Thistle Assistance is an initiative to help you feel safer and more comfortable when using public transport.

You may prefer more time to get to your seat. You may like your driver to speak more slowly and clearly. Thistle Assistance's card and app let transport staff know in an easy and subtle way what extra support you'd like.

Where you can use it

The Thistle Assistance card and app are recognised by many public transport operators across Scotland, from buses and trains to planes and ferries. Simply show your personalised card or app to their staff and they will understand what additional assistance you require.

Card and app benefits

The Thistle Assistance card and app are free to use for anyone who needs it. Use the card for one journey or purpose, or use it every day: it's adaptable and disposable.

The card and app symbols and instructions encompass a range of disabilities and impairments. They are also useful during pregnancy, or if you have temporary mobility issues, when some extra thought and care are appreciated.

Sometimes, using public transport

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Thistle Assistance Card

The Thistle Assistance card

The Thistle Assistance card is designed to fit in your purse or wallet along with your credit and loyalty cards.

As it's purely an information card, Thistle Assistance is free to everyone and comes with stickers to allow you to personalise how you use it. Symbol stickers indicate your type of disability or impairment, while short message stickers provide read-at-a-glance information for transport staff about the help you require.

An information leaflet outlines how to get the most from your card. And if your circumstances or requirements change, simply request or acquire a new card to reflect your current or changing needs.

You can now also add a sticker message if you are exempt from wearing a face covering. See more info over at our **travel safety page**.

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Thistle Assistance Card

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Thistle Assistance App

The Thistle Assistance App

Add the Thistle Assistance app to your smartphone or mobile device so it's always there when you need it. As it's solely an information app, Thistle Assistance is free for everyone to use.

Before travelling, select the symbol which best reflects your disability or impairment and add a message to highlight the help you need to show to transport staff. It's as simple as that. You can update or change the details you show at any time to reflect your personal circumstances.

You can now also add a message if you are exempt from wearing a face covering. See more info over at our **travel safety page**.

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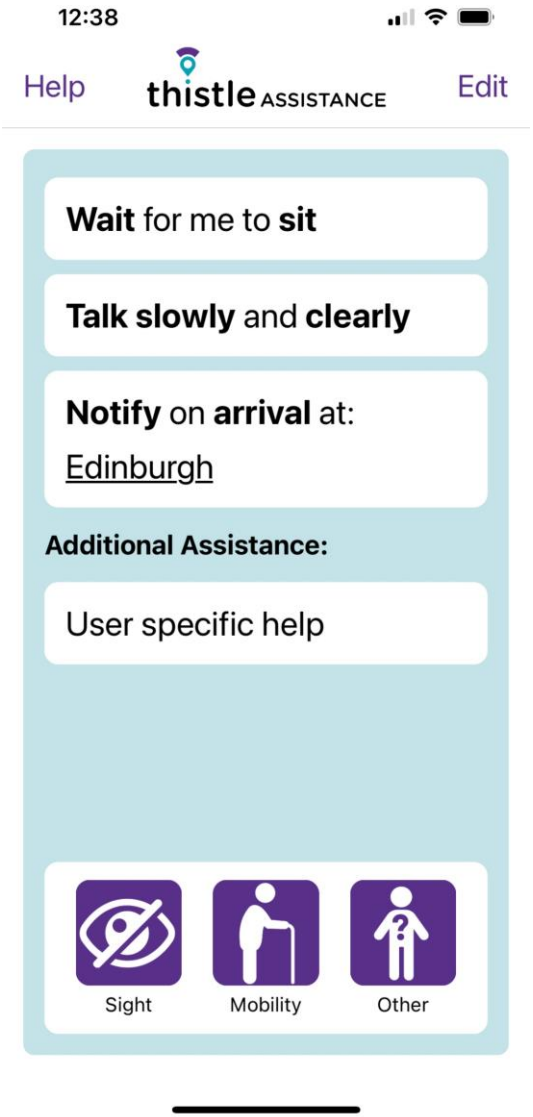
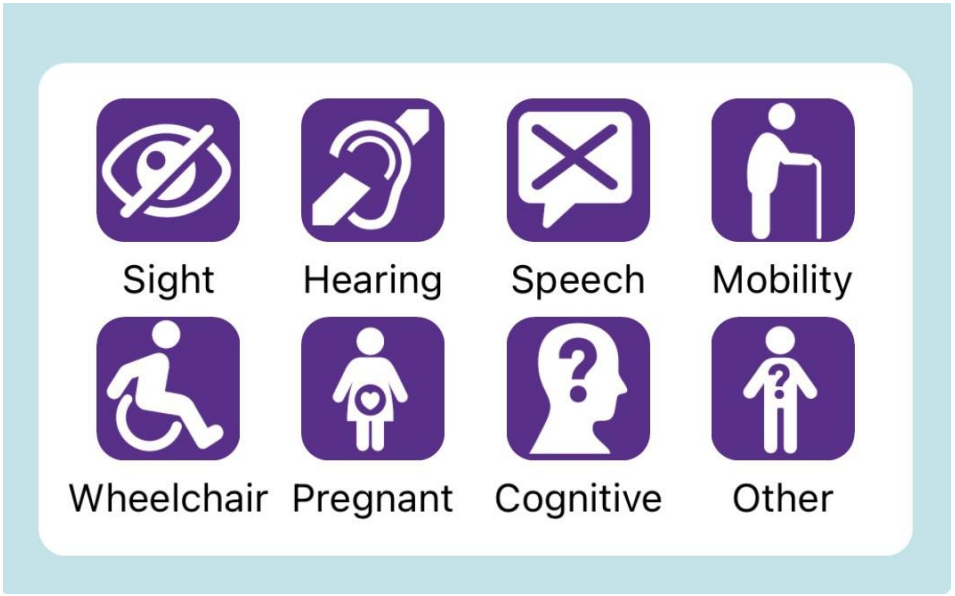
Thistle Assistance App





Thistle Assistance COVID-19

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COVID-19 Response

- ✓ Created an ‘exemption’ message for Card & App
- ✓ Updated the website with a COVID specific page in line with Scottish Government advice
- ✓ Developed promotional material
- ✓ Put in place a direct mail service for requests received via website & dedicated phone line.
- ✓ 20,000 cards sent out directly to the public and over 5,000 downloads of the App since March 2020.

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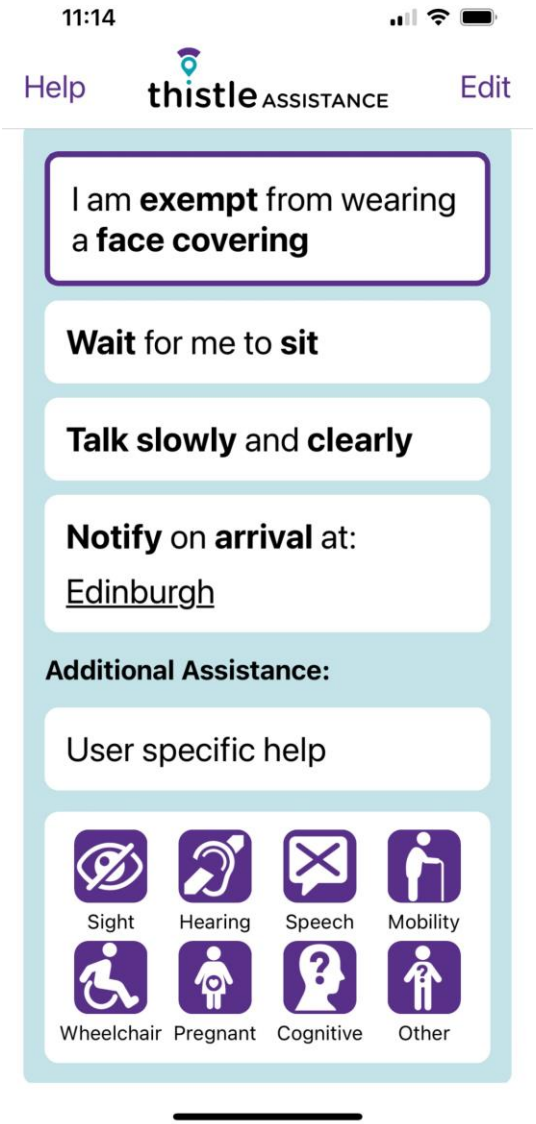
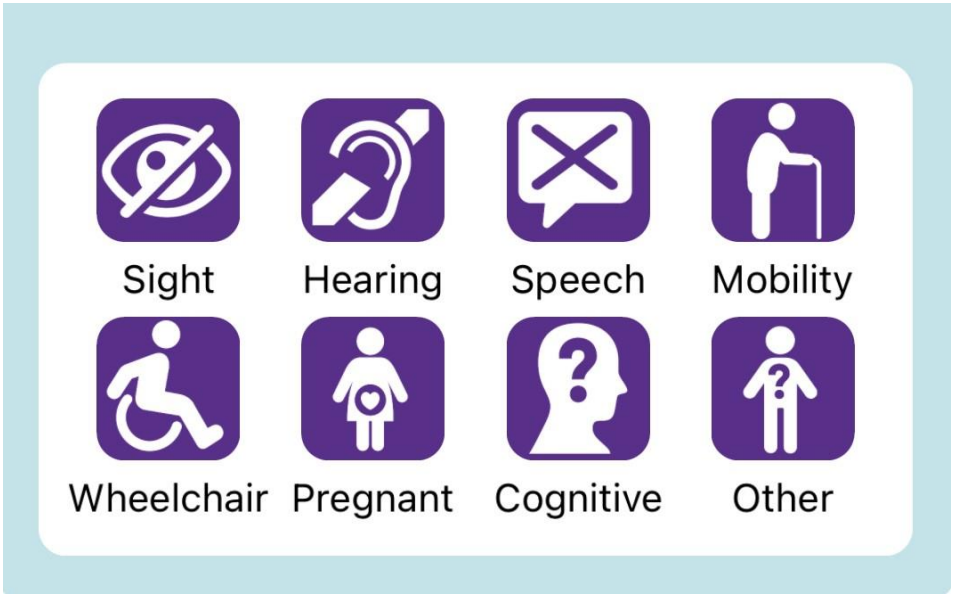
Thistle Assistance App





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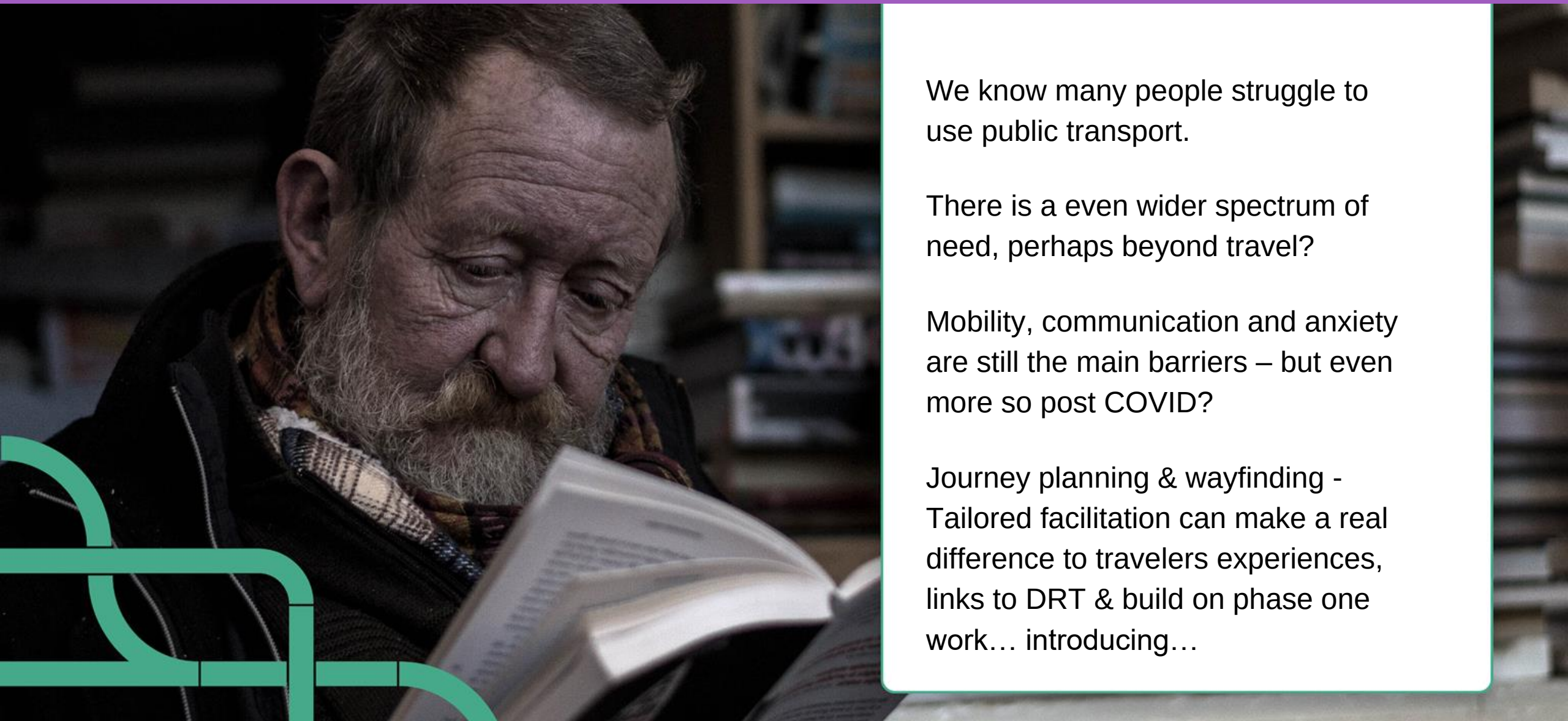
Further development



We know many people struggle to use public transport.

There is a even wider spectrum of need, perhaps beyond travel?

Mobility, communication and anxiety are still the main barriers – but even more so post COVID?

Journey planning & wayfinding - Tailored facilitation can make a real difference to travelers experiences, links to DRT & build on phase one work… introducing…

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Objectives

Disability Awareness	Adapts	Scottish Govt.	Scalable
Journey Planning	Multi user interface	Crowd sourcing	Multi-modal
Wayfinding	Ask for help	Real time	3rd party tracking

Solution

SENTIREAL
Personal Immersive Learning

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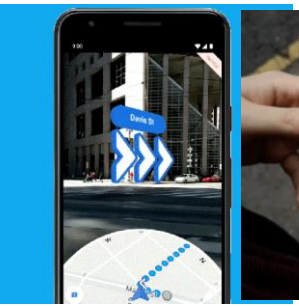
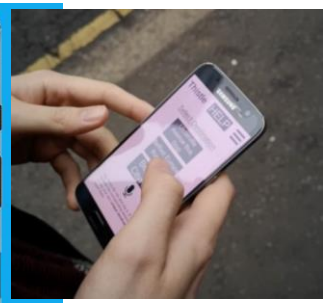

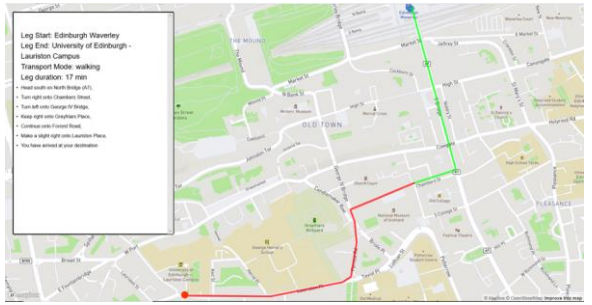

Focus development on the user experience.

Maximise the output from available funding.

Exploit existing market tested solutions.

VoyagAR Platform

IoT

UBER

Smart Transport

Maps for Life

waze $55M

Mapping

travelfusion
The World's Best Travel Planner

trainline

omio formerly go euro $396M

Aggregators

Tripadvisor $4B

GUIDE
EUAN'S
DISABLED ACCESS REVIEWS
EuansGuide.com

Crowdsourcing

Using Artificial Intelligence - Examples

SENTIREAL Personal Immersive Learning

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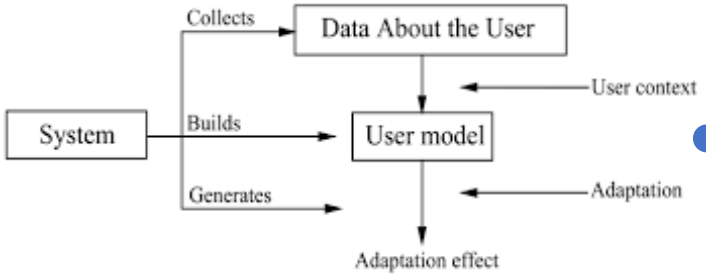
Modify Route based on external factors. Eg. Crowded bus – delay user until next bus.

Socialised routing – ensure users are not separated from friends and peer groups.

Adaptive interface and routes based on user impairments and preferences



Routes generated based on learned knowledge sourced from users, carers and crowdsourcing. Eg. Negative reports on a route – identify reason and extrapolate.

Identify and recommend facilities relevant to the user's disability – both enroute and at destination.

Testing

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Technical Testing

API testing.
Interface testing.
Functional testing.
Initial field testing.

User Testing 1

Testing single-mode
Testing multi-mode
Testing Notifications

Initial AI Testing

Focus on specific features.

User Testing 2

Limited Real-World Beta Release via a number of user groups.

User Testing 3

Regional Testing ->
Scotland Testing ->
NI Testing ->

National Release

Summary

SENTIREAL Personal Immersive Learning

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Take best-of-breed solutions
Consolidate into a single service

Use Artificial Intelligence to produce a simple personalised solution specific to the needs of the user

Deliver a simple adaptive interface that links seamlessly and dynamically with the environment and creates a protective bubble around the user

Commercialise by delivering a new market to existing commercial entities

Thanks

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www.thistleassistance.com