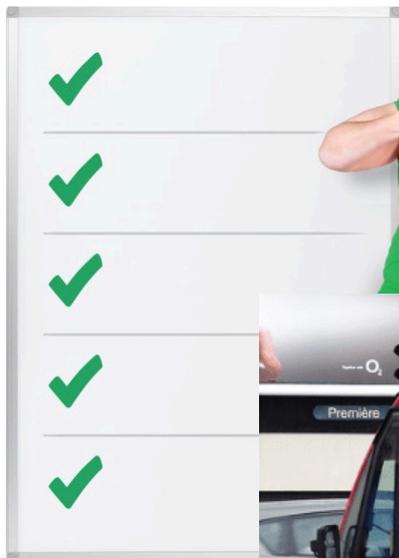


Summary of our work on Dial-a-Ride



Easy read booklet

About this booklet



We are **Transport for All**. We work to improve transport for disabled people in the UK.



In 2021-2022 we did some **research** to find out about **Dial-a-Ride**.

Research is when people collect information to help them think about problems and find ways to fix them.



Dial-a-Ride is a free transport service run by **Transport for London** (called **TfL** for short) for disabled people who can't use buses or trains.



After we did our research we wrote a report called **Dial-A-Ride: From Door to More**. The report said what we think needs to change to make Dial-a-Ride better.

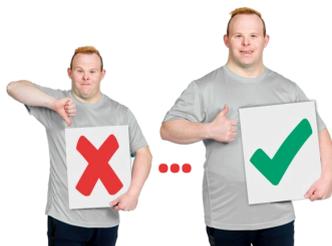


This booklet tells you about the report, and what some important organisations said about it.

About our research



We worked together with **Age UK London** to find out about Dial-a-Ride. Age UK London work to make London a better city for older people.



We wanted to find out how important Dial-a-Ride is for the people who use it, and what needs to change to make it better.



We spoke to 14 Dial-a-Ride users. We wrote a report that tells their stories. Our report was called **Dial-A-Ride: From Door to More.**



From our research we found out that

- Dial-a-Ride is very important for disabled people and older people in London.
- there are some problems with things like long waiting times on the phone.

What we found out

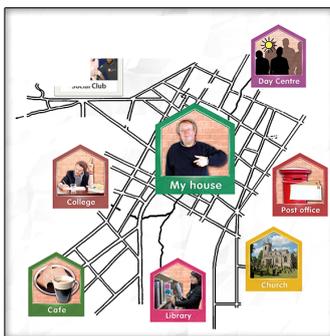


Here are the main points in our report. We found out that



- Dial-a-Ride is **essential** for lots of people so they can live a good life and do the things they want to do.

Essential means it must happen.



- Dial-a-Ride makes it possible for people to get the support they need, for example from groups or events.



- people use Dial-a-Ride because they have no other way to get where they want to go.



- it's difficult to get a booking for Dial-a-Ride at the time needed.

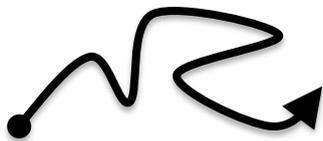
It can be hard to make a booking unless it is for the next day, and it's no longer possible to make a regular booking for activities at the same time and place.



- the maximum distance for rides stops people from going where they want to go.



- it can take a long time to make a booking on the phone. This can cost a lot, be annoying, and it can be painful for some people to hold a phone for a long time.



- sometimes rides are longer than they need to be because the route includes other drop-offs and collections.

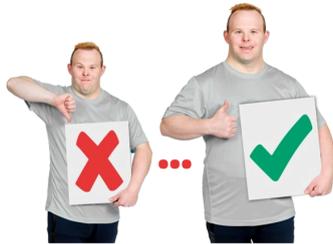


- it's difficult to get information about Dial-a-Ride.



- most drivers are very good.

About our report



We asked the 14 Dial-a-Ride users what changes they would like to happen to make the service better.



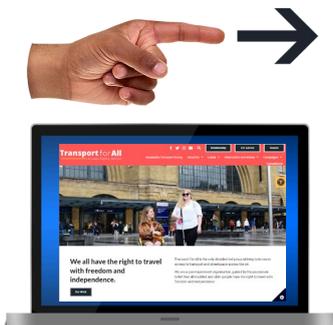
We made some **recommendations** in our report, and we had **responses** from TfL.

recommendation

Recommendations are suggestions and advice about the best thing to do.

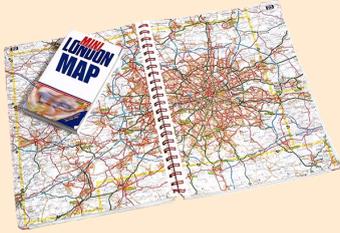
response

Responses are replies to the recommendations.



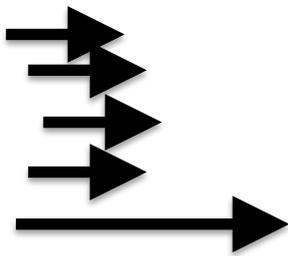
We tell you about the responses on the next pages of this booklet, or you can go to [our website](#) to read about them in full.

Recommendations and responses



Our recommendation

Make it possible to do longer distances and let users and staff know.

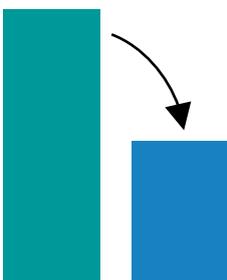


TfL response

Dial-a-Ride was made for short distances but there is no maximum distance.



We know it can be hard to get a booking for longer distances. This is because of the number of drivers and spaces, and because they can make other people's rides take longer.



If we make it possible to do longer distances, there will be less rides for everyone.



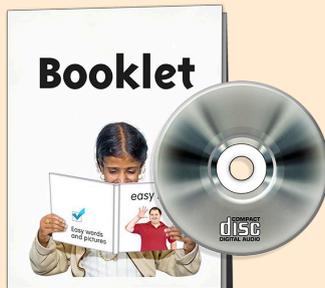
Our recommendation

Answer calls quicker, and call people back within 1 hour if they have to wait more than 10 minutes.



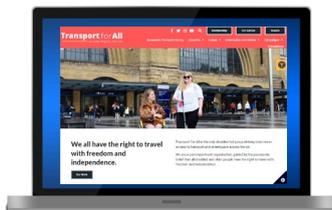
TfL response

We are putting in a better system next year and we will get more staff so calls will be answered quicker. We will find out if we can set up call-backs on the new system.



Our recommendation

Make sure information about Dial-a-Ride is sent regularly, and that newsletters and magazines are in alternative formats like audio CD.



TfL response

Our website gives full information about Dial-a-Ride. We also make our information in alternative formats if someone asks.



Our magazine called In Touch was sent less often during the pandemic.



Our recommendation

Make sure everyone can book at least 3 **return** rides every week.

Return means to go somewhere and back again.



TfL response

We would need more money to do this, and we might have to set a maximum number of rides or ask people to start paying for rides.



Our recommendation

Have 10% less bookings that are **refused** next year.

Refused means the booking was not possible.



TfL response

42,000 people in London use Dial-a-Ride and we do 90% of **requests**.

A **request** is when someone asks for a booking.



We will always try to do as many bookings as we can. Our new system should make this even better.



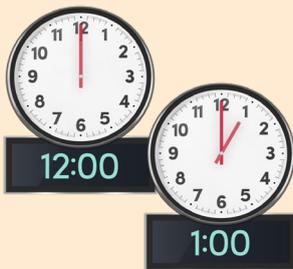
Our recommendation

Talk to Dial-a-Ride users about new systems and make sure they are tested by lots of different people.



TfL response

We plan to get people involved. We will be happy to include members of Age UK London and Transport for All .



Our recommendation

Change opening times so Dial-a-Ride is open until midnight on Mondays to Thursdays and 1am on Fridays to Sundays.



TfL response

We understand some people want to use Dial-a-Ride to travel later in the evenings, but there is not enough money for us to stay open longer.



We will always try to do the most work during the busiest times.



Our recommendation

Advertise Dial-a-Ride so that more people know about it. Make sure this includes people who don't use the internet.



TfL response

We agree that it's important to advertise in different ways. We would like to hear more ideas about how to do this. At the moment we give out leaflets.



Our recommendation

Send a confirmation by 5pm for all bookings for the next day.

A **confirmation** is a message that tells you a ride has been agreed.



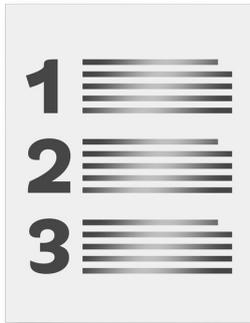
TfL response

We take bookings after 5pm for the next day, so it's not always possible to send a confirmation by 5pm. We know it's important to give confirmations before the trip happens and we already do this.



Our recommendation

Make the system better for booking transport to medical appointments, and make a list of places where people can get rides to for medical appointments.



TfL response

We already have lists online of places people can get rides to. We explain what is possible with Dial-a-Ride when people first use it.



Our staff have training to help people book rides. They are taught which rides can be booked through Dial-a-Ride and which can be booked through other services like the NHS.



Dial-a-Ride can't be used for rides to

- hospitals or clinics.
- day centres or schools.
- work.



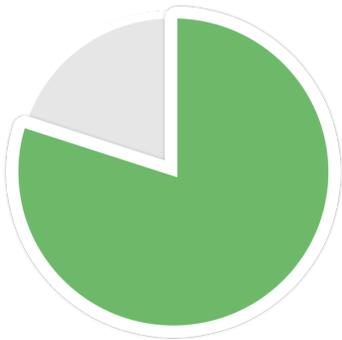
Dial-a-Ride can be used for rides to

- local doctor's surgeries, called GPs.



Our recommendation

Make sure Dial-a-Ride picks people up on time more. Set some targets for this and tell everyone how you are doing.



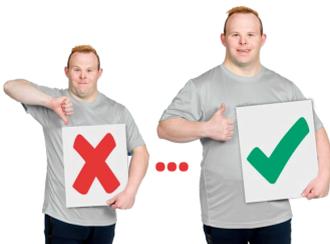
TfL response

We are happy to give more information about how we are doing. At the moment, about 85% of trips are on time. We want to get better but we can't set better targets unless we get more money.



Our recommendation

Look at how routes are planned to see if we can make rides quicker for more people.



TfL response

The aim of our new system is to make routes better. We always look at long rides to find out what we can do to make them better next time.



We also asked TfL about funding and engagement

Funding is the money TfL spends to run the Dial-a-Ride service.

Engagement is how TfL talks to and involves Dial-a-Ride users.



TfL response

We will make sure there is enough funding to run the Dial-a-Ride service each year for the number of people who want to use it.



It's hard to involve Dial-a-Ride users in everything we do.



We know that most people are very happy with Dial-a-Ride.



We believe it's very important that Dial-a-Ride users are involved.

What we think about TfL's responses



We are pleased that TfL are going to make some good changes.



We are sad that TfL won't make all the changes we recommended.



We are worried that TfL won't make changes, or won't make changes very quickly, and that they might not have enough funding.



We have asked the **Government** to give money to Dial-a-Ride.

The **Government** is in charge of running the country.

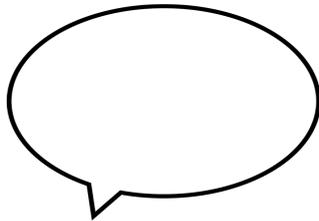


We want TfL to listen to Dial-a-Ride users and make their systems better.

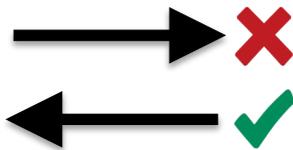
Meeting at City Hall



On 11th July 2022 we had a meeting at City Hall where some of the Dial-a-Ride users who helped us with our research told their stories to the General Manager of Dial-a-Ride.



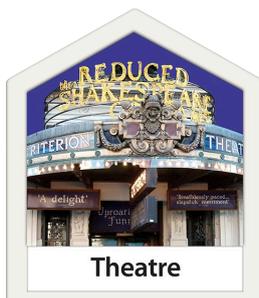
Here are some things they said in their stories.



Sometimes I have to get somewhere quickly, and Dial-a-Ride says they can't take me there, but they can bring me back.



I booked a ride to a Christmas party, but Dial-a-Ride didn't turn up. I kept on waiting and got very anxious. I won't forget it.



If I go to the theatre in the evening, I can't get a ride back later than 9pm. I want a normal life.

The London Assembly



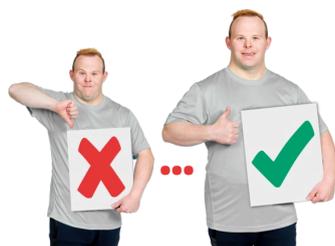
The **London Assembly** is part of the local Government in London. It is a group of people who make sure the Mayor of London does good work.



On 8th September 2022 the London Assembly officially asked TfL to make the Dial-a-Ride service better.



They said that Dial-a-Ride is an essential service for many people who live in London.



They said that Dial-a-Ride could be made better without spending a lot of money.

Thank you



Thank you to **Caroline Pidgeon** from the London Assembly. She helped run the meeting at City Hall and supports our work.



Thank you to the **14 Dial-a-Ride users** who helped with our research. Their help was essential for our report and our work to make Dial-a-Ride better.

Thank you to A2i for the words
www.a2i.co.uk (reference 36246)

The full version of this document is called
“DAR Summary”