**Transport (Scotland) Bill**

Stage 3

9 October 2019

**Key statistics**

21 NTS Workshops, 300 older people consulted

**Access to healthcare**

1/3 of older people whom we consulted in 2018 reported having had **difficulty getting to a medical appointment** due to a lack of suitable transport.

**Car use**

Older people living in rural areas are 50% more likely to have **access to a car** (3 in 5) than those who live in urban areas (2 in 5), highlighting the importance of effective public transport in rural areas.

**Reasons for travel**

**88%** of older people use public transport for **shopping**.

**76%** use public transport for **socialising**.

**59%** use public transport to get to **medical appointments**.

**36%** use public transport to get to **volunteer work**.

**Barriers to using public transport**

* Limited public toilets (44%)
* No evening services (44%)
* Infrequent services (57%)
* Living with dementia (11%)

**Introduction**

Age Scotland believes the Transport (Scotland) Bill is a positive step for older people in Scotland. We believe it can be strengthened further with consideration of the Stage 3 amendments laid out in this briefing paper.

We have worked with MSPs on a cross party basis to improve the Bill at each stage and called for several of the changes which were agreed at Stage 2.

Age Scotland’s work on this Bill has been informed by the results of a year of detailed consultation with hundreds of older people on their transport needs.

**Stage 2 asks carried forward**

Age Scotland called for a number of changes to the Bill at Stage 2 which were ultimately carried forward. These covered issues relating to accessibility of vehicles, the consultation and involvement of older people, and restrictions on pavement parking.

**Stage 3 amendments**

With reference to the Groupings of Amendments for Stage 3, Age Scotland believes – based on the policy principles we have shaped followed consultation with hundreds of older people – that the following amendments should be dealt with as set out:

**Group 1: National Transport Strategy**

38D SUPPORT

39 SUPPORT

39A SUPPORT

39B SUPPORT

40 SUPPORT

40A SUPPORT

41 CLARITY REQUIRED

42 SUPPORT

42A SUPPORT

**Group 12: Bus Services: consideration of needs of certain persons**

67 **SUPPORT**

68 **SUPPORT**

69 **SUPPORT**

70 **SUPPORT**

71 **SUPPORT**

**Group 13: Grants to bus service operators: accessibility conditions**

**154 SUPPORT**

**Group 15: Community Transport Services**

**75 SUPPORT**

**76 SUPPORT**

**121** CLARITY REQUIRED

**122** CLARITY REQUIRED

**123** CLARITY REQUIRED

**124** CLARITY REQUIRED

**125** CLARITY REQUIRED

**Group 26: Road Orders**

**174 SUPPORT**

**175 SUPPORT**

**Stage 3 amendments – Rationale**

**Group 1: National Transport Strategy**

We believe **amendment 38D** (moved by Jamie Greene MSP) should be supported. We fully support the intention behind the moving of this amendment, which fairly reflects the needs of older people and recognises the extensive engagement work carried out by Age Scotland with older people during the development of the new National Transport Strategy (NTS2).

**Amendment 39** (Michael Matheson MSP) rightly inserts retrospectively the obligation to consult – a process in which Age Scotland and hundreds of older people have been directly involved.

**Amendments 39A and 39B** (Jamie Greene MSP) seek to extend the bodies consulted during the process of shaping NTS2 to include the Parliament and the industry, which we support.

**Amendment 40** (Michael Matheson MSP) sets out a process for presenting NTS2 to the Parliament, while **Amendment 40A** (Jamie Greene MSP) provides for a ministerial statement on its contents. We believe both should be supported on the basis that both increase accountability.

**Amendment 41** (Michael Matheson MSP) provides for ongoing review of NTS2 and for scope for ministers to revise the strategy “if they consider it appropriate”. It is essential that thorough consultation is carried out with older people and other relevant groups if the strategy is to be amended before its projected 20 year lifespan is up. If Members are satisfied that amendment 41 provides sufficiently for this, we recommend it be supported.

**Amendments 42 and 42A** (Michael Matheson MSP and Jamie Greene MSP respectively) provide for reporting on progress towards NTS2’s vision every three years, and for revising the timeline to achieving the vision during each report. We recommend that Members support both amendments.

**Group 12: Bus Services: consideration of needs of certain persons**

**Amendments 67-71** (Colin Smyth MSP) provide for bus services which must take into account the need of the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010, which included age and disability. We therefore encourage support for all of these amendments.

**Group 13: Grants to bus service operators: accessibility conditions**

**Amendment 154** (Colin Smyth) would make grants from the Scottish Government to bus operators conditional on disability awareness training of their drivers and on their providing accessibly formatted timetables on request to those who need them. We believe this would be easily achievable for operators and has the potential to be transformative in reducing injuries and helping those living with conditions such as dementia to travel more safely. We strongly encourage Members to support this amendment.

**Group 15: Community Transport Services**

**Amendments 75-76** (Michael Matheson MSP)improve the Bill and we believe Members should support them.

**Amendment 75** clarifies what is meant by ‘community transport’ (i.e. community bus services, on the whole) and should be supported.

**Amendment 76** directly follows 75. We believe they should be supported together.

**Amendments 121-125** (Michael Matheson MSP) are less clear to us in their purpose. Their effect is to remove references to health and social care partnerships with regard to a duty to work with community transport bodies, which applies to health boards, in Section 68 of the Bill. We encourage Members to seek assurances from the Cabinet Secretary that this will not result in diminished engagement with, or services for, older people who require social care.

**Group 26: Road Orders**

**Amendment 174** (John Finnie MSP) effectively gives ministers a greater say in the content of road traffic orders and public notification procedures. This is something Age Scotland has long called for and would help carers, older people and in particular, those living with dementia and those who do not use the internet. We believe greater use should be made of other media (radio, local newspapers, notice boards) to communicate plans for road closures in order to tackle the effects of ‘digital exclusion’ which leave many older people less informed. We therefore recommend support for this amendment.

**Amendment 175** (John Finnie MSP) gives communities and individuals an opportunity to object – and crucially, to comment – when there is a road closure planned. We strongly believe that community consultation is an essential principle in good government and we recommend support for this amendment.

**Conclusion**

Age Scotland believes the Transport (Scotland) Bill is a good piece of legislation which will improve the lives of older people on the whole, and we welcome and support it. We have set out in this briefing, as we have done at Stages 1 and 2, our views on how the Bill could be further improved via amendments.

We hope to continue working with MSPs of all parties on transport policy to ensure that Scotland truly has a transport system that works for everyone.

**Want to find out more?**

As Scotland’s national charity supporting people over the age of 50, Age Scotland works to improve older people’s lives and promote their rights and interests. We aim to help people love later life, whatever their circumstances. We want Scotland to be the best place in the world to grow older.

Our Policy, Communications and Campaigns team research, analyse and comment on a wide range of public policy issues affecting older people in Scotland.

Our work is guided by the views and needs of older people themselves.

**Further information**

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