

***Briefing***

***Stage 2***

***Transport (Scotland) Bill***

**May 2019**

**General principles**

Age Scotland welcomes the introduction of the Transport (Scotland) Bill, which was a key commitment of the SNP 2016 Scottish Parliament manifesto and broadly welcomes the provisions within the Bill.

Throughout 2018 Age Scotland engaged extensively with hundreds of older people throughout Scotland about the National Transport Strategy review. With the proportion of people aged 75 and over set to double in many areas of Scotland over the next two decades, and the number of people living with dementia set to rise, it is essential our transport system meets the needs of older people in order to be inclusive. This work has shaped our transport policy priorities.

**Our recommendations at Stage 2**

* **Pt 1 Low Emission Zones** – the schedule of exemptions, whether on the face of the Bill or in Regulations, should take account of Community Transport vehicles.
* **Pt 2 Bus Services** – contracts for bus services should ensure bus vehicles are accessible to all with limited mobility, not just wheelchair users. This could be achieved by amendment.
* **Pt 3 National Smart Ticketing Advisory Board** – is welcome, and it is important that older people are represented on this board to ensure we have a transport system that is fit for purpose in Scotland. Age Scotland would welcome the opportunity to share our expertise on this board. In any event it is essential that the Board is fully aware of the diverse needs of older people.
* **Pt 4 Pavement Parking** – We support the provision in the bill to prohibit double parking, and parking on pavements. We call on Members to support amendments lodged by Jackie Baillie MSP, John Mason MSP and Mike Rumbles MSP which will help people with limited mobility.
* **Pt 5 Scottish Road Works Commissioner** – “giving notice” of works has to mean something for older people too. The Bill gives an opportunity for a greatly improved system of notifying the public of planned road works, allowing older people and carers to plan journeys.

**Bus Services**

Public buses are the most commonly used form of transport for older people by a significant margin. It is of paramount importance that buses and timetables now and in the future meet the needs of older people. One of the greatest challenges for many older people is that many buses are not truly accessible, with several steps before they reach a seat.

**We therefore call on the Bill to be amended to ensure that vehicles are truly accessible for people living with a range of disabilities, not just for wheelchair users.**

**Smart Ticketing Advisory Board**

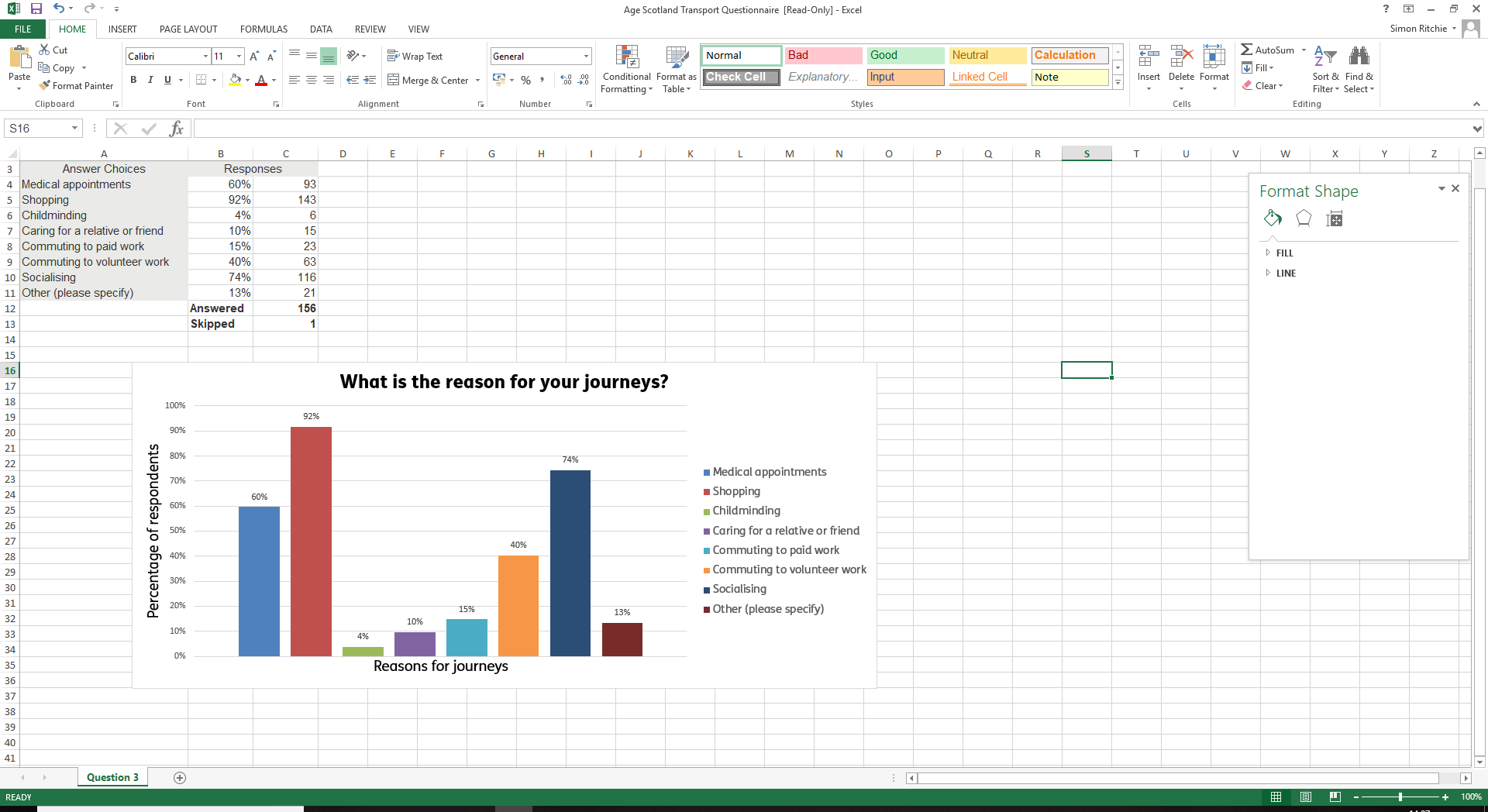
The proportion of our population aged over 75 is set to double by 2040. It is essential that older people’s voices are listened to not once, but constantly in transport provision.

**We therefore call on the Bill to be amended to ensure that older people have a permanent voice on the board.**

**Low Emission Zones**

A well-connected transport system can have a beneficial impact on people’s wellbeing and should be understood in a wider context than just getting people to their destination. It can help tackle loneliness and social isolation, and improve health outcomes, and benefit the local economy.

From our research we know from older people that they take the bus for a multitude of reasons such as meeting up with friends, attend medical appointments, to get to volunteer work, go shopping, and to fulfil childminding duties.



*Age Scotland Transport Questionnaire, 2018 , n=300*

It is however a risk that Part 1 of the Bill, which would provide the powers to create Low Emission Zones, would make life more difficult for Community Transport operators, many of which run older vehicles that have been adapted at great expense.

**We recommend that the Bill is either amended to take account of Community Transport operators, or Members should push for their inclusion in the schedule of exemptions provided by Regulations.**

**Responsible Parking**

Age Scotland believes that Part 4 of the Transport (Scotland) Bill is a crucial step in making Scotland’s streets more accessible. We have received calls to our freephone helpline which provides information, friendship, and advice about the issue of cars parking on pavements, making them difficult to pass for people with visual impairments or limited mobility.

Therefore, the prohibition of double parking would indeed be very welcome, however, Age Scotland is concerned how this measure would be enforced. It is essential that the effect of these provisions is applicable uniformly across Scotland, whether antisocial parking is decriminalised or not.

**We call on greater further clarity on how measures would be enforced to prevent irresponsible parking. We also support amendments lodged by Jackie Baillie, John Mason and Mike Rumbles that deal with pavement parking.**

**Road Works**

When road works take place in any built-up area where pedestrians might walk, it is essential that pedestrians can make their way around road work sites safely. This means that diversions must be accessible, clearly signposted and dementia-friendly. If road works effect a bus stop, or a transport hub, it is important that passengers can quickly and efficiently find out, in the clearest terms, what they should do to avoid the works. It is also important that any scheduled roadworks on pavements or footpaths are advertised widely in advance (not just online or at the site) so that people with limited mobility, sensory impairments, or cognitive impairments such as people living with dementia, are able to formulate alternative travel plans in advance.

**Age Scotland welcomes the provisions to enhance the powers of the Scottish Road Works Commissioner and indeed to improve the regulation of road works more generally. However, there is scope for greater provision in notification of works.**

**Conclusion**

Age Scotland continues to support the Transport (Scotland) Bill and the fact it gives Local Councils more power to improve bus services in their areas. Our research has found that asides from privately owned cars, public bus services are by far the most commonly used form of public transport amongst older people. We have, therefore, made several key recommendations which will help to ensure that Transport in Scotland will be able to meet the needs of older people.

Age Scotland looks forward to working with Members of the Scottish Parliament on this Bill to make sure that the older people’s transport needs are fully recognised.

***About Age Scotland***

Age Scotland is Scotland’s leading charity advocating on behalf of older people. Our vision is a Scotland where everyone can love later life. Our mission is to inspire, involve and empower older people in Scotland, and influence others, so that people in Scotland can enjoy better later lives.

Age Scotland’s Strategic Aims are to promote positive views of ageing and later life; help older people to be as well as they can be; and to tackle loneliness and isolation.

***For more information:***

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